

Nicholas Udall

Roister

Doister


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**NICHOLAS UDALL, M.A.**

Master, in succession, of Eton College and Westminster School

# **Roister Doister**

Written, probably also represented, before 1553

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EDITED BY  
**EDWARD ARBER**

F.S.A. ETC. LATE EXAMINER IN ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE  
TO THE UNIVERSITY OF  
LONDON

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LONDON BOMBAY SYDNEY

From Powles I went, to Aeton sent,  
 To learne straight wayes, the Latin phraise.  
 Where fiftie three stripes giuen to mee,  
 at once I had:  
 For fault but small, or none at all,  
 It came to passe, thus beat I was,  
 See Udall see, the mercy of thee,  
 to mee poore lad.

Nicholas  
 Udall scholare  
 master at  
 Eton.

1537. Sept. 27. Is made Vicar of Braintree. *Newcourt, Rep. ii. 89.*  
 1542. Udall publishes a translation of the 3rd and 4th books of  
 Erasmus' *Apophthegms*.

\*1543. *Cott. MS. Titus, B. viii. p. 371*, is a long letter, undated  
 and unaddressed, to some one, as to 'my restitution to the  
 roume of Scholemaister in Eton.'

1544. Dec. 14. Resigns the Vicarship of Braintree. *Newcourt, idem.*  
 1542-1545. He is engaged with the Princess, afterwards Queen Mary  
 and others in translating Erasmus' *Paraphrase of the New*  
*Testament* into English.

'1545, Sept. 30, at London,' date of his *Preface to Luke*.

In his *Pref.* to *John*, partly translated by Princess Mary, partly by Rev.  
 F. Malet; D.D.: Udall gives us the following account of female education in  
 his day; which can only, however, apply to a few women, like Elizabeth,  
 Mary, and Lady Jane Grey. "But nowe in this gracious and blisseful tyme of  
 knowledge, in whiche it hath pleased almighty God to reuele and shewe abroad  
 the lyght of his moste holye ghospell: what a noubre is there of noble women  
 (especially here in this realme of Englande,) yea and howe many in the yeares  
 of tender vyrginitie, not only aswel seen and as familiarly trade in the Latine  
 and Greke tounges, as in their owne mother language: but also both in all  
 kindes of prophane litterature, and liberall artes, exactly studied and exer-  
 cised, and in the holy Scriptures and Theologie so ripe, that they are able  
 aptely cunningly, and with much grace eyther to indite or translate into the  
 vulgare tongue, for the publike instruccion and edifying of the vnlearned  
 multitude. . . . It is nowe no newes in Englande to see young damisels in  
 nobles houses and in the Courtes of Princes, in stede of cardes and other instru-  
 mentes of idle trifleyng, to haue continually in her handes, eyther Psalmes,  
 Omelies, and other deuoute meditacions, or elles Paules Epistles, or some  
 booke of holye Scripture matiers: and as familiarlye both to reade or reason  
 thereof in Greke, Latine, Frenche, or Italian, as in Englishe."

1547. Jan. 28. Edward VI. ascends the throne.

'1552. July 20. At Windsor.' The date of Udall's preface to the translation  
 by himself and others, of T. Gemini's *Anatomy*.

1553. July 6. Mary succeeds to the crown.

1554. Dec. 3. Date of a warrant dormer from the Queen to the Master of  
 her Revels. [Reprinted in *The Loseley MSS.* Ed. by A. J.  
 KEMPE, F.S.A. London. 1836.] The warrant runs thus—  
 'Whereas our welbeloued Nicholas Udall hath at soondrie  
 seasons convenient heretofore shewed and myndeth hereafter  
 to shewe his diligence in setting forth of Dialogues and En-  
 terludes before us so' ou' regell disporte and recreacion.' . . .  
 And then goes on to authorize the loan of apparel for these  
 purposes. Did the popularity of the Dramatist, and her per-  
 sonal acquaintance with him, since they had worked together  
 on Erasmus' *Paraphrase*, lead the Queen to condone the  
 intense Protestantism of the Preacher, even to the continuing  
 of him in favour? Udall and Ascham, two noted Protestants,  
 are both favoured by Mary.

\*1555. Udall is appointed Master of Westminster School, and so con-  
 1556. Nov. tinues until Mary re-establishes the Monastery at Westminster.  
 1556. Dec. Udall dies.

23. He is buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster. *W. D. Cooper,*  
*as above.*

# ROISTER DOISTER.

## INTRODUCTION.



THE author and early date of the present Comedy are ascertained by a quotation in Sir Thomas Wilson's *Rule of Reason* of Roister Doister's letter to Dame Custance.

The first edition of the *Rule of Reason*, 1550-1, is a very scarce work ; of which I have been unable to see a copy. The second edition, 1662, 8vo, 'newly corrected by Thomas Vvilson,' has *not* the quotation : which apparently first appears in the third edition of 1663, 4to, the title of which runs, "The Rule of Reason, conteynyng the Arte of *Logique*. Sette furthe in Englishe, and newly corrected by Thomas Wilson. *Anno Domini. M.D.LIII.* Menfe Januarij."

At folio of this edition, Wilson, in treating of *The Ambiguities*, adds to his previous examples, Roister Doister's letter, with the following heading :

¶ An example of soche doubtful writing, whiche by reason of pointing maie haue double sense, and contrarie meaning, taken out of an entrelude made by Nicolas Vdal.

The present comedy was therefore undoubtedly written before the close of the reign of Edward VI., who died 6 July 1553.

If it was then printed, that entire edition has perished. The prayer for the Queen at p. 86, can be for no other than Queen Elizabeth : and therefore, although the title-page is wanting and there is no conclusive allusion in the play, it may confidently be believed that the extant text was printed in Elizabeth's reign, and that it had possibly in some respects been modified.

There now comes the evidence of the Stationers Co.'s Register, as quoted by Mr. Collier, *Extracts*, i. 154, *Ed.* 1848 :

Rd of Thomas Hackett, for hys lycense for pryntinge of a play intituled Rauf Ruyster Duster, &c. . . . . iiij<sup>d</sup>

The missing title-page and the absence of any colophon in the Eton copy, here reprinted, preclude demonstrative proof that it is one of Hackett's edition. It is however morally certain that it does represent that text.

On the whole, therefore, though that text was posthumous—

Udall having died in Dec. 1556—: and though its authorship rests entirely on the above heading of Wilson's quotation: it may be safely accepted that Udall is the author of this comedy, and that he wrote it before 1553. Conclusions both of them consonant with the known facts of Udall's life.

The comedy was probably first written for the Eton boys to act. Mr. W. D. Cooper thus writes:—

Certain, however, it is that it was the custom of Eton, about the feast of St. Andrew, for the Master to choose some Latin stage-play for the boys to act in the following Christmas holidays, and that he might sometimes order smart and witty English plays. "Among the writings of Udall about the year 1540," says Warton, "are recited *Plures Comedie*, and a tragedy *De Papatu*, on the Papacy, written probably to be acted by his scholars;" and it is equally probable that the English comedy was written with a like object; for it is admirably adapted to be a good acting play, and the author avows in the prologue that his models were Plautus and Terence, with whose writings his scholars were familiar. *Intro. Memoir. p. xvi.*

Of the few dramatic pieces of that early period that have survived, *Roister Doister* is regarded as the transition-play from the Mysteries and Enterludes of the Middle Ages to the Comedies of modern times. A critical examination of its position in our Literature has been made by Mr. Collier. *Hist. of Dram. Poetry. ii. 445-460 Ed. 1830.* A full consideration of the play would exceed our present limits: we may however call attention to the peculiar rhyme in which Udall wrote it.

In the present reprint, the text appears according to modern usage; but in the original it stands in lines of unvarying length. Where the speech is continuous, these lines rhyme like our ordinary poetry: but when the dialogue is short; one, two, three or more speeches are thrown into one line, and the last syllables of that line—whether they occur in words in the middle or at the end of a sentence, as dictated simply by the length of line of type—are made to rough rhyme in couplets. Thus an irregular assonance jingles through the play.

On the opposite page are a few lines set up as in the original, to illustrate this peculiarity; and also to show the mode used of marking the actor's names. May this peculiar rhyme be accepted as any evidence that Udall composed this play as much for the prefs as the stage?

There being no description of the representation and the stage directions being scanty: *Roister Doister* should be read a first time to learn the plot; a second time to imagine the action: and a third to combine and enjoy the two.



## ACTUS. iiii. SCÆNA. v.

Bottom of the second, even-numbered page of folio 24, in the original edition.

C. Cūstance. Trupenie get thee in, thou shalt among them knowe,  
 How to vse thy selfe, like a propre man I trowe.  
 Trupeny. I go. Ex. C. C. Now Tristram Trusty I thank you right much.  
 For at my first sending to come ye neuer grutch.  
 C. Trusty. Dame Cūstance God ye saue, and while my life shall last,  
 For my friende Goodluckes sake ye shall not sende in wast.  
 C. Cūstance. He shal giue you thanks. C. Trusty. I wil do much for his sake  
 C. Cūstance. But alack, I feare, great displeasure shall be take.  
 C. Trusty. Wherefore? C. C. For a foolish matter. C. C. What is your cause  
 C. Cūstance. I am yll accombred with a couple of dawes.

Nay

Top of the first, odd-numbered page of folio 25.

## Roister Doister.

Nay weepe not, woman; but tell me what your cause is  
 As concerning my friende is any thing amisse?  
 No not on my part: but here was Sym Surebby.  
 He was with me and tolde me so. C. C. And he stooode by  
 While Ralph Roister Doister with helpe of Merygreeke,  
 For promise of marriage dyd vnto me seeke.

C. Trusty.  
 C. Cūstance.  
 C. Trustie.

## Roister Doister.

The whole of Udall's plays were supposed to have perished [see *Wood. Ath. Oxon. i.* 213, Ed. 1813]. The Rev. T. Briggs, an old Etonian, in 1818, became the possessor of the now famous unique copy: which he presented to the Library of Eton College, in December of that year.

1. [?1566.] Lond. ? First edition of a revised text. The copy, now at Eton 1 vol. 4to. College, consists of 33 folios. The title-page is wanting.
2. 1818. Lond. '*Ralph Roister Doyster*, A Comedy. London. Reprinted 1 vol. 8vo. in the year 1818.' [Ed. and privately printed by Rev. T. BRIGGS. 30 copies only struck off. The printer was James Compton, Middle St., Cloth Fair, London.] At the beginning is the following *Advertisement*:--

'It appears from the Biographia Dramatica, that a Play called *Rauf Ruster Duster* was entered on the books of the Stationers' Company in the year 1566, but that it was supposed never to have been printed: this, however, is now proved to be a mistake, a copy having been found contained in a collection of plays which was lately upon sale in London. It is true that the name is spelt somewhat differently, but it is presumed there can be no doubt of its being the piece in question. The book unfortunately wants the title-page, and the author's name is not known. It is now in the Library of Eton College, and is here reprinted for the amusement of the reader.'

3. 1821. Lond. '*Ralph Roister Doyster*, a Comedy, entered on the books 1 vol. 8vo. of the Stationers' Company, 1566. London: Printed by F. Marshall, Kenton St., Brunswick Sq., 1821.' [Editor not known. R. Southey's copy, with his autograph, and dated 1 Feb. 1837, is in the British Museum. Press-mark, 1344, k.]

Neither of the above knew that Udall was the author. The editor of 1821 reprint writes, 'The author, whoever he was,' p. iv. It was Mr. Collier who connected Wilson's quotation with *Roister Doister*, and so proved Udall to be its author. Writing on 14th April 1865; he thus begins the *Preface* of his *Bibl. Account of Ear. Eng. Lit.* Ed. 1865.

'During my whole life, now rapidly approaching fourscore, I have been a diligent reader, and, as far as my means would allow, a greedy purchaser of all works connected with early English literature. It is nearly sixty years since I became possessed of my first really valuable old book of this kind—Wilson's "Art of Logic," printed by Richard Grafton 1551—from which I ascertained the not unimportant facts that "Ralph Roister Doister" was an older play than "Gammer Gurton's Needle," and that it had been written by Nicholas Udall, Master of Eton School: I thus learned who was the author of the earliest comedy, properly so called, in our language. This was my first literary discovery, made several years anterior, although I had not occasion to render it public, until I printed my Notes upon "Doddsley's Old Plays," soon after 1820.'\*

4. 1830. Lond. *The Old English Drama*. A series of Plays, at 6d each, 3 vols. 18mo. printed and published by Thomas White. *Ralph Roister Doyster* is the first.
5. 1847. Lond. *Shakespeare Society*. *Ralph Roister Doister*, &c., and 1 vol. 8vo. *The Tragicall of Gorboduc*. Edited, with Introductory Memoirs, by W. D. COOPER, F.S.A. The text collated with the original by J. P. COLLIER, F.S.A.
6. 24 July 1869. Lond. 1 vol. 8vo. *English Reprints*: see title at p. 1.

∴ All the previous reprints have been and now are unobtainable to most persons. It is to the most courteous and generous kindness of the present Provost and Fellows of Eton College that I am enabled to place what I hope may prove an exact text into the hands of every one. I trust also to keep it perpetually on sale: that the student of the History of our Literature may no longer lack one of the most important illustrations of the growth of English Dramatic Poesy.

\* See vol. ii. p. 3. Ed. 1825.



# The Prologue.



That Creature is in health, eyther yong or olde,

But som mirth with modestie wil be glad to vse

As we in thys Enterlude shall now vnfolde,

Wherin all scurilitie we vtterly refuse,

Auoiding such mirth wherin is abuse :

Knowing nothing more comendable for a mans recreation

Than Mirth which is vsed in an honest fashion :

For Myrth prolongeth lyfe, and causeth health.

Mirth recreates our spirites and voydeth pensiuenesse,

Mirth increaseth amitie, not hindring our wealth,

Mirth is to be vsed both of more and lesse,

Being mixed with vertue in decent comlynesse.

As we trust no good nature can gainsay the same :

Which mirth we intende to vse, auoidyng all blame.

The wyse Poets long time heretofore,

Vnder merrie Comedies secretes did declare,

Wherein was contained very vertuous lore,

With mysteries and forewarnings very rare.

Suche to write neither *Plautus* nor *Terence* dyd spare,

Whiche among the learned at this day beares the bell:

These with such other therein dyd excell.

Our Comedie or Enterlude which we intende to play,

Is named Royster Doyster in deede.

Which against the vayne glorious doth inuey,

Whose humour the roysling sort continually doth feede.

Thus by your pacience we intende to proceede

In this our Enterlude by Gods leaue and grace,

And here I take my leaue for a certaine space.

FINIS.

# *Roister Doister.*

## Actus. j. Scæna. j.

*Mathewe Merygreeke. He entreth singing.*



S long lyueth the mery man (they say)  
As doth the fory man, and longer  
by a day.

Yet the Grasshopper for all his  
Sommer pipyng,  
Sterueth in Winter wyth hungrie  
gripyng, [men aduise  
Therefore an other sayd sawe doth

That they be together both mery and wise.

Thys Lesson must I practife, or else ere long,

Wyth mee Mathew Merygreeke it will be wrong.

In deede men so call me, for by him that vs bought,

What euer chaunce betide, I can take no thought,

Yet wisedome woulde that I did my selfe bethinke

Where to be prouided this day of meate and drinke :

For know ye, that for all this merie note of mine,

He might appose me now that should aske where I dine.

My lyuing lieth heere and there, of Gods grace,

Sometime wyth this good man, sometye in that place,

Sometime Lewis Loytrer biddeth me come neere,

Somewhyles Watkin Waster maketh vs good cheere,

Sometime Dany Diceplayer when he hath well cast

Keepeth reuell route as long as it will last.

Sometime Tom Titiuile maketh vs a feast,

Sometime with sir Hugh Pye I am a bidden guesst,

Sometime at Nichol Neuerthriues I get a soppe,

Sometime I am feasted with Bryan Blinkinsoppe,

Sometime I hang on Hankyn Hoddydodies fleue,

But thys day on Ralph Royster Doysters by hys leue.

For truely of all men he is my chiefe banker

Both for meate and money, and my chiefe shootanker

## *Roister Doister.*

For, sooth Roister Doister in that he doth say,  
 And require what ye will ye shall haue no nay.  
 But now of Roister Doister somewhat to expresse,  
 That ye may esteeme him after hys worthinesse,  
 In these twentie townes and seke them throughout,  
 Is not the like stocke, whereon to graffe a loute.  
 All the day long is he facing and craking  
 Of his great actes in fighting and fraymaking:  
 But when Roister Doister is put to his prooffe,  
 To keepe the Queenes peace is more for his behoofe.  
 If any woman smyle or cast on hym an eye,  
 Vp is he to the harde eares in loue by and by,  
 And in all the hotte haste must she be hys wife.  
 Else farewell hys good days, and farewell his life,  
 Maister Raufe Royster Doister is but dead and gon  
 Excepte she on hym take some compassion,  
 Then chiefe of counsell, must be Mathew Merygreeke,  
 What if I for mariage to suche an one seeke?  
 Then must I sooth it, what euer it is:  
 For what he sayth or doth can not be amisse,  
 Holde vp his yea and nay, be his nowne white sonne,  
 Prayse and rouse him well, and ye haue his heart wonne,  
 For so well liketh he his owne fonde fashions  
 That he taketh pride of false commendations.  
 But such sporte haue I with him as I would not leese,  
 Though I should be bounde to lyue with bread and  
 cheese.

For exalt hym, and haue hym as ye lust in deede:  
 Yea to hold his finger in a hole for a neede.  
 I can with a worde make him sayne or loth,  
 I can with as much make him pleased or wroth,  
 I can when I will make him mery and gl'd,  
 I can when me lust make him sory and sad,  
 I can fet him in hope and eke in dispaire, [faire.  
 I can make him speake rough, and make him speake  
 But I maruell I see hym not all thys same day,  
 I wyll seeke him out: But loe he commeth thys way,  
 I haue yond espied hym sadly comming,  
 And in loue for twentie pounce, by hys glommyng.

# Actus. j. Scaena. ij.

*Rafe Roister Doister. Mathew Merygreeke.*

*R. Royster.*



Come death when thou wilt,  
I am weary of my life.

*M. Mery.* I tolde you I  
we should wowe another  
wife.

*R. Royster.* Why did God make me suche a goodly  
person? [sport anon.

*M. Mery.* He is in by the weke, we shall haue

*R. Royster.* And where is my trustie friende Mathew  
Merygreeke?

*M. Mery.* I wyll make as I sawe him not, he doth  
me seeke. [is hee,

*R. Roister.* I haue hym espyed me thinketh, yond  
Hough Mathew Merygreeke my friend, a worde with  
thee. [haste,

*M. Mery.* I wyll not heare him, but make as I had  
Farewell all my good friendes, the tyme away doth waste,  
And the tide they say, tarieth for no man.

*R. Roister.* Thou must with thy good counsell helpe  
me if thou can.

*M. Mery.* God keepe thee worshypfull Maister Ro-  
ister Doister,

And fare well the lustie Maister Roister Doister.

*R. Royster.* I muste needes speake with thee a  
worde or twaine. [again,

*M. Mery.* Within a month or two I will be here  
Negligence in greatesse ye knowe may marre all.

*R. Roister.* Attende vpon me now, and well rewarde  
thee I shall.

*M. Mery.* I haue take my leaue, and the tide is  
well spent. [content,

*R. Roister.* I die except thou helpe, I pray thee be  
Doe thy parte wel now, and aske what thou wilt,

*Roister Doister.*

For without thy aide my matter is all spilt.

*M. Mery.* Then to serue your turne I will some paines take,

And let all myne owne affaires alone for your sake.

*R. Royster.* My whole hope and trust resteth onely in thee.

*M. Mery.* Then can ye not doe amisse what euer it bee.

*R. Royster.* Gramercies Merygreeke, most bounde to thee I am.

*M. Mery.* But vp with that heart, and speake out like a ramme,

Ye speake like a Capon that had the cough now :

Bee of good cheere, anon ye shall doe well ynow.

*R. Royster.* Vpon thy comforte, I will all things well handle. [candle.

*M. Mery.* So loe, that is a breast to blowe out a

But what is this great matter I woulde faine knowe,

We shall fynde remedie therefore I trowe.

Doe ye lacke money ? ye knowe myne olde offers,

Ye haue always a key to my purse and coffers.

*R. Royster.* I thanke thee : had euer man suche a frende ? [lende.

*M. Mery.* Ye gyue vnto me : I must needes to you

*R. Royster.* Nay I haue money plentie all things to discharge. [offer so large.

*M. Mery.* That knewe I ryght well when I made

But it is no suche matter.

*M. Mery.* What is it than ?

Are ye in daunger of debte to any man ?

If ye be, take no thought nor be not afraide,

Let them hardly take thought how they shall be paid.

*R. Royster.* Tut I owe nought.

*M. Mery.* What then ? fear ye imprisonment ?

*R. Royster.* No.

*M. Mery.* No I wist ye offende, not so to be shent.

But if he had, the Toure coulde not you so holde,

But to breake out at all times ye would be bolde.

What is it ? hath any man threatned you to beate ?

*R. Royster.* What is he that durst haue put me in that heate ?



He that beateth me by his armes shall well fynde,  
That I will not be farre from him nor runne behinde.

*M. Mery.* That thing knowe all men euer since ye  
ouerthrewe,

The fellow of the Lion which *Hercules* slewe.

But what is it than?

*R. Royster.* Of loue I make my mone. [alone?

*M. Mery.* Ah this foolishe a loue, wilt neare let vs  
But bicause ye were refused the last day,

Ye sayd ye woulde nere more be intangled that way.

I would medle no more, since I fynde all so vnkinde,

*R. Royster.* Yea, but I can not so put loue out of  
my minde.

*Math. Mer.* But is your loue tell me first, in any wise.  
In the way of Mariage, or of Merchandise?

If it may otherwise than lawfull be founde,

Ye get none of my helpe for a hundred pounce.

*R. Royster.* No by my trouth I would haue hir to  
my Wife. [your life,

*M. Mery.* Then are ye a good man, and God faue  
And what or who is she, with whome ye are in loue?

*R. Royster.* A woman whome I knowe not by what  
meanes to moue.

*M. Mery.* Who is it?

*R. Royster.* A woman yond.

*M. Mery.* What is hir name?

*R. Royster.* Hir yonder.

*M. Mery.* Whom.

*R. Royster.* Mistresse ah.

*M. Mery.* Fy fy for shame

Loue ye, and know not whome? but hir yonde, a Woman,  
We shall then get you a Wyfe, I can not tell whan.

*R. Royster.* The faire Woman, that supped wyth  
vs yesternyght,

And I hearde hir name twice or thrice, and had it ryght.

*M. Mery.* Yea, ye may see ye nere take me to good  
cheere with you,

If ye had, I coulde haue tolde you hir name now.

*R. Royster.* I was to blame in deede, but the nexte  
tyme perchaunce:

And she twelleth in this house.

**M. Mery.** What Christian Cufance.

**R. Royster.** Except I haue hir to my Wife, I shall runne madde. [for madde.

**M. Mery.** Nay vnwife perhaps, but I warrant you

**R. Royster.** I am vtterly dead vnlesse I haue my desire.

**M. Mery.** Where be the bellows that blewe this fodeine fire?

**R. Royster.** I heare she is worthe a thousande ponde and more. [afore,

**M. Mery.** Yea, but learne this one lesson of me

An hundred ponde of Marriage money doubtlesse,

Is euer thirtie ponde sterlyng, or somewhat lesse,

So that hir Thousande ponde yf she be thriftie,

Is muche neere about two hundred and fiftie,

Howbeit wowers and Widowes are neuer poore.

**R. Royster.** Is she a Widowe? I loue hir better therefore.

**M. Mery.** But I heare she hath made promise to another. [my brother.

**R. Royster.** He shall goe without hir, and he were

**M. Mery.** I haue hearde say, I am right well aduised, That she hath to Gawyn Goodlucke promised.

**R. Royster.** What is that Gawyn Goodlucke?

**M. Mery.** a Merchant man.

**R. Royster.** Shall he speede afore me? nay fir by sweete Saint Anne.

Ah fir, Backare quod Mortimer to his sowe,

I wyll haue hir myne owne selfe I make God a vow.

For I tell thee, she is worthe a thousande ponde.

**M. Mery.** Yet a fitter wife for your maship might be founde:

Suche a goodly man as you, might get one wyth lande,

Besides poundes of golde a thousande and a thousande,

And a thousande, and a thousande, and a thousande,

And so to the summe of twentie hundred thousande,

Your most goodly personage is worthie of no lesse.

**R. Royster.** I am sorie God made me so comely doubtlesse.

For that maketh me eche where so highly fauoured,  
And all women on me so enamoured. — [out that?

**M. Mery.** Enamoured quod you? haue ye spied  
Ah sir, mary nowe I see you know what is what.  
Enamoured ka? mary sir say that againe,  
But I thought not ye had marked it so plaine.

**R. Royster.** Yes, eche where they gaze all vpon me  
and stare. [they dare.

**M. Mery.** Yea malkyn, I warrant you as muche as  
And ye will not beleue what they say in the streete,  
When your mashyp passeth by all such as I meete,  
That sometimes I can scarce finde what aunswere to  
make.

Who is this (sayth one) sir *Launcelot du lake*?  
Who is this, greate *Guy* of Warwike, sayth an other?  
No (say I) it is the thirteenth *Hercules* brother.  
Who is this? noble  *Hector* of *Troy*, sayth the thirde?  
No, but of the same nest (say I) it is a birde.  
Who is this? greate *Goliah*, *Sampson*, or *Colbrande*?  
No (say I) but it is a brute of the Alie lande.  
Who is this? greate *Alexander*? or *Charle le Maigne*?  
No, it is the tenth Worthie, say I to them agayne:  
I knowe not if I sayd well.

**R. Royster.** Yes for so I am.

**M. Mery.** Yea, for there were but nine worthies be-  
fore ye came.

To some others, the thirde *Cato* I doe you call.  
And so as well as I can I aunswere them all.  
Sir I pray you, what lorde or great gentleman is this?  
Maister Ralph Roister Doister dame say I, ywis.  
O Lorde (sayth she than) what a goodly man it is,  
Woulde Christ I had such a husbände as he is.  
O Lorde (say some) that the sight of his face we lacke:  
It is inough for you (say I) to see his backe.  
His face is for ladies of high and noble parages.  
With whome he hardly scapeth great mariages.  
With muche more than this, and much otherwise.

**R. Royster.** I can thee thanke that thou canst suche  
answeres deuise:

But I perceyue thou doste me throughly knowe.

*Roister Doister.*

**M. Mery.** I marke your maners for myne owne  
 learnyng I trowe,  
 But fuche is your beautie, and fuche are your actes,  
 Suche is your personage, and fuche are your factes,  
 That all women faire and fowle, more and lesse, [lesse,  
 That eye you, they lubbe you, they talke of you doubt-  
 Your p[leasant] looke maketh them all merie,  
 Ye passe not by, but they laugh till they be werie,  
 Yea and money coulde I haue the truthe to tell,  
 Of many, to bryng you that way where they dwell.

**R. Royster.** Merygreeke for this thy reporting well  
 of mee : [pardee :

**M. Mery.** What shoulde I else sir, it is my duetie

**R. Royster.** I promise thou shalt not lacke, while I  
 haue a grote.

**M. Mery.** Faith sir, and I nere had more nede of a  
 newe cote.

**R. Royster.** Thou shalte haue one to morowe, and  
 golde for to spende. [ende.

**M. Mery.** Then I trust to bring the day to a good  
 For as for mine owne parte hauing money inowe,  
 I could lyue onely with the remembrance of you.  
 But nowe to your Widowe whome you loue so hotte.

**R. Royster.** By cocke thou sayest truthe, I had al-  
 most forgotte. [you what?

**M. Mery.** What if Christian Custance will not haue

**R. Royster.** Haue me? yes I warrant you, neuer  
 doubt of that,

I knowe she loueth me, but she dare not speake.

**M. Mery.** In deede meete it were some body should  
 it breake. [night,

**R. Royster.** She looked on me twentie tymes yester-  
 And laughed so.

**M. Mery.** That she coulde not sitte vpright,

**R. Royster.** No faith coulde she not.

**M. Mery.** No euen such a thing I cast.

**R. Royster.** But for wowyng thou knowest women  
 are shamefast. [glad,

But and she 'leue my minde, I knowe she would be  
 And thinke it the best chaunce that euer she had.

**M. Mery.** Too hir then like a man, and he bolde  
forth to starte,

Wowers neuer speede well, that haue a false harte.

**R. Roister.** What may I best doe?

**M. Mery.** Sir remaine ye a while,  
Ere long one or other of hir house will appere.  
Ye knowe my minde.

**R. Roister.** Yea now hardly lette me alone.

**M. Mery.** In the meane time sir, if you please, I  
wyll home,

And call your Musicians, for in this your case  
It would sette you forth, and all your wowyng grace,  
Ye may not lacke your instrumentes to play and sing.

**R. Roister.** Thou knowest I can doe that.

**M. Mery.** As well as any thing.

Shall I go call your folkes, that ye may shewe a cast?

**R. Roister.** Yea runne I beseeche thee in all possi-  
ble haste.

**M. Mery.** I goe.

*Exeat.*

**R. Roister.** Yea for I loue singyng out of measure,  
It comforteth my spirites and doth me great pleasure.  
But who commeth forth yond from my swete hearte  
Custance?

My matter frameth well, thys is a luckie chaunce.

## Actus. j. Scæna. iij.

**Mage Mumble crust,** *spinning on the distaffe.* **Tibet**  
**Talk** apace, *sowyng.* **Annot** *Alyface knittyng.*

**R. Roister.**

**M. Mumb.**



**F** thys distaffe were spoonne  
Margerie Mumblecrust.

**Tib Talk.** Where good  
sale ale is will drinke  
no water I trust.

**M. Mumb.** Dame Custance hath promised vs good  
ale and white bread. [hir head :

**Tib Talk.** If she kepe not promise, I will beshrewe

## *Roister Doister.*

But it will be starke nyght before I shall haue done.

**R. Royster.** I will stande here a while, and talke with them anon,

I heare them speake of Custance, which doth my heart good,

To heare hir name spoken doth euen comfort my blood.

**M. Mumbl.** Sit downe to your worke Tibet like a good girle.

**Tib. Talk.** Nourse medle you with your spyndle and your whirle,

No haste but good, Madge Mumblecrust, for whip and whurre

The olde prouerbe doth say, neuer made good furre.

**M. Mumbl.** Well, ye wyll fitte downe to your worke anon, I trust.

**Tib. Talk.** Soft fire maketh sweete malte, good Madge Mumblecrust.

**M. Mumbl.** And sweete malte maketh ioly good ale for the nones.

**Tib. Talk.** Whiche will slide downe the lane without any bones.

*Cantet.*

Olde browne bread crustes must haue much good mumblyng,

But good ale downe your throte hath good easie tumbling.

**R. Royster.** The iolyest wenche that ere I hearde, little mouse,

May I not reioyce that she shall dwell in my house?

**Tib. Talk.** So firrha, nowe this geare beginneth for to frame.

**M. Mumbl.** Thanks to God, though your work stand stil, your tong is not lame

**Tib. Talk.** And though your teeth be gone, both so sharpe and so fine

Yet your tongue can renne on patins as well as mine.

**M. Mumbl.** Ye were not for nought named Tyb Talke apace.

**Tib. Talk.** Doth my talke grieue you? Alack, God saue your grace.

**M. Mumbl.** I holde a grote ye will drinke anon for this geare.

**Tib. Talk.** And I wyll pray you the stripes for me to beare.

**M. Mumbl.** I holde a penny, ye will drink without a cup. [all vp.]

**Tib. Talk.** Wherein so ere ye drinke, I wote ye drinke

**An. Alyface.** By Cock and well sowed, my good Tibet Talke apace.

**Tib. Talk.** And een as well knitte my nowne Annot Alyface.

**R. Royster.** See what a fort she kepeth that must be my wife.

Shall not I when I haue hir, leade a merrie life?

**Tib. Talk.** Welcome my good wenche, and fitte here by me iust.

**An. Alyface.** And howe doth our old beldame here, Mage Mumblecrust?

**Tib. Talk.** Chyde, and finde faultes, and threaten to complaine.

**An. Alyface.** To make vs poore girles shent to hir is small gaine.

**M. Mumbl.** I dyd neyther chyde, nor complaine, nor threaten.

**R. Royster.** It woulde grieue my heart to see one of them beaten.

**M. Mumbl.** I dyd nothyng but byd hir worke and holde hir peace.

**Tib. Talk.** So would I, if you coulde your clattering cease :

But the deuill can not make olde trotte holde hir tong.

**An. Alyface.** Let all these matters passe, and we three sing a song,

So shall we pleasantly bothe the tyme beguile now,  
And eke dispatche all our workes ere we can tell how.

**Tib. Talk.** I shrew them that say nay, and that shall not be I.

**M. Mumbl.** And I am well content.

**Tib. Talk.** Sing on then by and by.

**R. Royster.** And I will not away, but listen to their song,

Yet Merygreeke and my folkes tary very long.

# Roister Doister.

Tib, An, and Margerie, doe singe here.

Pipe mery Annot. etc.

Trilla, Trilla. Trillarie.

Worke Tibet, worke Annot, worke Margerie.

Sewe Tibet, knitte Annot, spinne Margerie.

Let vs see who shall winne the victorie.

Tib. Talk. This sleue is not willyng to be sewed I  
trowe, [throwe.

A small thing might make me all in the grounde to

*Then they sing agayne.*

Pipe merrie Annot. etc.

Trilla. Trilla. Trillarie.

What Tibet, what Annot, what Margerie.

Ye sleepe, but we doe not, that shall we trie.

Your fingers be nombde, our worke will not lie.

Tib. Talk. If ye doe so againe, well I would aduise  
you nay.

In good sooth one stoppe more, and I make holy day.

*They singe the thirde tyme.*

Pipe Mery Annot. etc.

Trilla. Trilla. Trillarie.

Nowe Tibbet, now Annot, nowe Margerie.

Nowe whippet apace for the maystrie,

But it will not be, our mouth is so drie.

Tib. Talk. Ah, eche finger is a thombe to day me  
thinke,

I care not to let all alone, choose it swimme or sinke.

*They sing the fourth tyme.*

Pipe Mery Annot. etc.

Trilla. Trilla. Trillarie.

When Tibet, when Annot, when Margerie.

I will not, I can not, no more can I. *Lette hir caste-*  
Then giue we all ouer, and there let it lye. *downe hir*  
*worke.*

Tib. Talk. There it lieth, the worste is but a curried  
cote,



Tut I am vsed therto, I care not a grote.

*An. Alfyce.* Haue we done singyng since? then  
will I in againe,

Here I founde you, and here I leaue both twaine. *Exeat.*

*M. Mumbl.* And I will not be long after: Tib  
Talke apace.

*Tib. Talk.* What is ye matter?

*M. Mumbl.* Yond stode a man al this space  
And hath hearde all that euer we spake togyther.

*Tib. Talk.* Mary the more loute he for his comming  
hither.

And the lesse good he can to listen maidens talke.

I care not and I go byd him hence for to walke:

It were well done to knowe what he maketh here  
away.

*R. Royster.* Nowe myght I speake to them, if I wist  
what to say. [he is.

*M. Mumbl.* Nay we will go both off, and see what

*R. Royster.* One that hath hearde all your talke  
and singyng ywis.

*Tib. Talk.* The more to blame you, a good thriftie  
husbande [hande.

Woulde elsewhere haue had some better matters in

*R. Royster.* I dyd it for no harme, but for good  
loue I beare, [heare.

To your dame mistresse Custance, I did your talke  
And Mistresse nource I will kisse you for acquaintance.

*M. Mumbl.* I come anon sir.

*Tib. Talk.* Faith I would our dame Custance  
Sawe this geare.

*M. Mumbl.* I must first wipe al cleane, yea I must.

*Tib. Talk.* Ill chieue it dotyng foole, but it must be  
cust.

*M. Mumbl.* God yelde you sir, chad not so much  
ichotte not whan,

Nere since chwas bore chwine, of such a gay gentleman.

*R. Royster.* I will kisse you too mayden for the good  
will I beare you.

*Tib. Talk.* No forsoth, by your leaue ye shall not  
kisse me.

*Roister Doister.*

**R. Royster.** Yes be not ascarde, I doe not disdayne you a whit.

**Tib. Talk.** Why shoulde I feare you? I haue not so little wit,

Ye are but a man I knowe very well.

**R. Royster.** Why then?

**Tib. Talk.** Forsooth for I wyll not, I vse not to kisse men.

**R. Royster.** I would faine kisse you too good maiden, if I myght.

**Tib. Talk.** What shold that neede?

**R. Royster.** But to honor you by this light.

I vse to kisse all them that I loue to God I vowe.

**Tib. Talk.** Yea sir? I pray you when dyd ye last kisse your cowe.

**R. Royster.** Ye might be proude to kisse me, if ye were wise.

**Tib. Talk.** What promotion were therein?

**R. Royster.** Nourse is not so nice.

**Tib. Talk.** Well I haue not bene taught to kissing and licking.

**R. Royster.** Yet I thanke you mistresse Nourse, ye made no sticking.

**M. Mumbl.** I will not flicke for a kosse with such a man as you.

**Tib. Talk.** They that lust: I will againe to my sewyng now.

**An. Alyface.** Tidings hough, tidings, dame Custance greeteth you well.

**R. Royster.** Whome me?

**An. Alyface.** You sir? no sir? I do no suche tale tell.

**R. Royster.** But and she knewe me here.

**An. Alyface.** Tybet 'Talke apace,

Your mistresse Custance and mine, must speake with your grace.

**Tib. Talk.** With me?

**An. Alyface.** Ye muste come in to hir out of all doutes.

**Tib. Talk.** And my work not half done? A mischief on all loutes.

*Ex. am.*

**R. Royster.** Ah good sweet nourse.

**M. Mumbl.** A good sweete gentleman.

**R. Royster.** What?

**M. Mumbl.** Nay I can not tel sir, but what thing would you?

**R. Royster.** Howe dothe sweete Custance, my heart of gold, tell me how?

**M. Mumbl.** She dothe very well sir, and commaunde me to you.

**R. Royster.** To me?

**M. Mumbl.** Yea to you sir.

**R. Royster.** To me? nurse tel me plain

To me?

**M. Mumbl.** Ye.

**R. Royster.** That word maketh me alieue again.

**M. Mumbl.** She commaunde me to one last day who ere it was.

**R. Royster.** That was een to me and none other by the Masse.

**M. Mumbl.** I can not tell you surely, but one it was.

**R. Royster.** It was I and none other: this commeth to good passe.

I promise thee nourse I fauour hir.

**M. Mumbl.** Een so sir.

**R. Royster.** Bid hir sue to me for mariage.

**M. Mumbl.** Een so sir.

**R. Royster.** And surely for thy sake she shall speede.

**M. Mumbl.** Een so sir.

**R. Royster.** I shall be contented to take hir.

**M. Mumbl.** Een so sir.

**R. Royster.** But at thy request and for thy sake.

**M. Mumbl.** Een so sir.

**R. Royster.** And come hearke in thine eare what to say.

**M. Mumbl.** Een so sir.

*Here lette him  
tell hir a great  
long tale in  
her eare.*

## Actus. j. Scæna. iiij.

Mathew Merygreeke. Robinet Doughtie. Harpax.

Ralph Royster. Margerie Mumblecrust.

M. Mery.



Come on sirs apace, and quite  
your selues like men,

Your pains shalbe rewarded.

D. Dou. But I wot not  
when.

M. Mery. Do your maister worship as ye haue  
done in time past. [haue a cast.

D. Dought. Speake to them : of mine office he shall

M. Mery. Harpax, looke that thou doe well too,  
and thy fellow.

Harpax. I warrant, if he will myne example folowe.

M. Mery. Curtsie whooresons, douke you and  
crouche at euery worde, [borde.

D. Dought. Yes whether our maister speake earnest or

M. Mery. For this lieth vpon his preferment in  
deede. [speede.

D. Dought. Oft is hee a wower, but neuer doth he

M. Mery. But with whome is he nowe so sadly  
roundyng yond?

D. Dought. With *Nobs nicebecctur miserere* sonde.

[M.] Mery. God be at your wedding, be ye spedde  
-alredie?

I did not suppose that your loue was so greedie,

I perceiue nowe ye haue chose of deuotion,

And ioy haue ye ladie of your promotion.

R. Royster. Tushe foole, thou art deceiued, this is  
not she. [well I vise ye.

M. Mery. Well mocke muche of hir, and keepe hir

I will take no charge of such a faire piece keeping.

M. Mumb. What ayleth thys fellowe? he driueth  
me to weeping. [merrie woman,

M. Mery. What weepe on the weddyng day? be

Thou gh I say it, ye haue chose a good gentleman.

R. Royster. Kocks nownes what meanest thou man,  
tut a whistle.

[M. Mery.] Ah fir, be good to hir, she is but a  
Ah sweete lambe and coney. [gristle,

R. Royster. Tut thou art deceiued. [receiued.

M. Mery. Weepe no more lady, ye shall be well  
Vp wyth some mery noyse firs, to bring home the bride.

R. Royster. Gogs armes knaue, art thou madde?  
I tel thee thou art wide. [home brought.

M. Mery. Then ye entende by nyght to haue hir

R. Royster. I tel thec no.

M. Mery. How then?

R. Royster. Tis neither ment ne thought.

M. Mery. What shall we then doe with hir?

R. Royster. Ah foolish harebraine,  
This is not she.

M. Mery. No is? why then vnsayde againe,  
And what yong girle is this with your mashyp so bolde?

R. Royster. A girle? [yere old.

M. Mery. Yea. I dare say, scarfe yet three score

R. Royster. This same is the faire widowes nourse  
of whome ye wotte. [home olde trotte,

M. Mery. Is she but a nourse of a house? hence  
Hence at once.

R. Royster. No, no.

M. Mery. What an please your maship  
A nourse talke so homely with one of your worship?

R. Royster. I will haue it so: it is my pleasure and will.

M. Mery. Then I am content. Nourse come  
again, tarry still.

R. Royster. What, she will helpe forward this my  
sute for hir part. [ing on my hart.

M. Mery. Then ist mine owne pygs nie, and bless-

R. Royster. This is our best friend man.

M. Mery. Then teach hir what to say

M. Mumb. I am taught already.

M. Mery. Then go, make no delay.

R. Royster. Yet hark one word in thine eare.

M. Mery. Back firs from his taile. [counsaile?

R. Royster. Backe vilaynes, will ye be priuie of my

M. Mery. Backe firs. so: I tolde you afore ye  
would be shent.

# Roister Doister.

R. Royster. She shall haue the first day a whole pecke of argent.

M. Mumbl. A pecke? *Nomine patris*, haue ye so much spare? [were it bare,

R. Royster. Yea and a carte lode therto, or else Besides other mouables, housholde stufte and lande.

M. Mumbl. Haue ye lands too.

R. Royster. An hundred marks.

M. Mery. Yea a thousand

M. Mumbl. And haue ye cattell too? and sheepe too?

R. Royster. Yea a fewe. [shewe.

M. Mery. He is ashamed the numbre of them to Een rounde about him, as many thousande sheepe goes, As he and thou and I too, haue fingers and toes.

M. Mumbl. And how many yeares olde be you?

R. Royster. Fortie at lest.

M. Mery. Yea and thrice fortie to them.

R. Royster. Nay now thou dost iest.

I am not so olde, thou misreckonest my yeares.

M. Mery. I know that: but my minde was on bullockes and steeres.

M. Mumbl. And what shall I shewe hir your masterhips name is? [that ywis.

R. Royster. Nay she shall make sute ere she know

M. Mumbl. Yet let me somewhat knowe.

M. Mery. This is hee vnderstand, That killed the blewe Spider in Blanchepouder lande.

M. Mumbl. Yea *Iesus*, William zee law, dyd he zo law?

M. Mery. Yea and the last Elephant that euer he sawe, As the beast passed by, he start out of a buske, And een with pure strength of armes pluckt out his great tuske. [that?

M. Mumbl. *Iesus*, *nomine patris*, what a thing was

R. Roister. Yea but Merygreke one thing thou

M. Mery. What? [hast forgot.

R. Royster. Of thother Elephant.

M. Mery. Oh hym that fledde away.

R. Royster. Yea. [that day

M. Mery. Yea he knew that his match was in place Tut. he bet the king of Crickets on Christmasse day,

That he crept in a hole, and not a worde to say

**M. Mumbl.** A fore man by zembletee.

**M. Mery.** Why, he wrong a club

Once in a fray out of the hande of Belzebub.

**R. Royster.** And how when Mumfision?

**M. Mery.** Oh your coustirelyng

Bore the lanterne a fiede so before the gozelyng.

Nay that is to long a matter now to be tolde:

Neuer aske his name Nurfe, I warrant thee, be bolde,

He conquered in one day from *Rome*, to *Naples*,

And woonne Townes nurse as fast as thou canst make  
Apples. [he is to fore.

**M. Mumbl.** O Lorde, my heart quaketh for feare:

**R. Royster.** Thou makest hir to much afearde,  
Merygreeke no more.

This tale woulde feare my sweete heart Custanee right  
euill. [not the deuill.

**M. Mery.** Nay let hir take him Nurfe, and feare

But thus is our song dastit. Sirs ye may home againe.

**R. Royster.** No shall they not. I charge you all  
here to remaine:

The villaine slaues a whole day ere they can be founde.

**M. Mery.** Couche on your marybones whooresons,  
down to the ground.

Was it meete he should tarie so long in one place

Without harmonie of Musike, or some solace?

Who so hath suche bees as your maister in hys head,

Had neede to haue his spirites with Musike to be fed.

By your maisterhips licence.

**R. Royster.** What is that? a moate? [your coate.

**M. Mery.** No it was a fooles feather had light on

**R. Roister.** I was nigh no feathers since I came  
from my bed. [your hed.

**M. Mery.** No sir, it was a haire that was fall from

**R. Roister.** My men com when it pleseth them.

**M. Mery.** By your leue.

**R. Roister.** What is that? [foot of a gnat.

**M. Mery.** Your gown was foule spotted with the

**R. Roister.** Their maister to offende they are no-  
What now? [thing afearde.

*Roister Doister.*

**M. Mery.** A lousy haire from your masterships beard. [one offence.

**Omnes famulæ.** And sir for Nurfs sake pardon this  
We shall not after this shew the like negligence.

**R. Royster.** I pardon you this once, and come sing  
nere the wurse. [tleman nurse?

**M. Mery.** How like you the goodnesse of this gen-

**M. Mumbl.** God saue his maisterhip that so can  
his men forgeue,

And I wyll heare them sing ere I go, by his leaue.

**R. Royster.** Mary and thou shalt wenche, come we  
two will daunce. [song perchaunce.

**M. Mumbl.** Nay I will by myne owne selfe foote the

**R. Royster.** Go to it sirs lustily.

**M. Mumbl.** Pipe vp a mery note,

Let me heare it playde, I will foote it for a grote.

*Cantent.*

[mistresse.

**R. Royster.** Now nurse take thys same letter here to thy  
And as my trust is in thee plie my businesse.

**M. Mumbl.** It shalbe done?

**M. Mery.** Who made it?

**R. Royster.** I wrote it ech whit.

**M. Mery.** Then nedes it no mending.

**R. Royster.** No, no.

**M. Mery.** No I know your wit.

I warrant it wel.

**M. Mumbl.** It shal be deliuered.

But if ye speede, shall I be considered?

**M. Mery.** Whough, dost thou doubt of that?

**Madge.** What shal I haue? [deuise to craue

**M. Mery.** An hundred times more than thou canst

**M. Mumbl.** Shall I haue some newe geare? for  
my olde is all spent. [ladies rayment.

**M. Mery.** The worst kitchen wench shall goe in

**M. Mumbl.** Yea? [go better

**M. Mery.** And the worst drudge in the house shal  
Than your mistresse doth now.

**Mar.** Then I trudge with your letter. [mine owne.

**R. Royster.** Now may I repose me: Custance is  
Let vs sing and play homeward that it may be knowne.



*M. Mery.* But are you sure, that your letter is well

*R. Royster.* I wrote it my selfe. [enough?

*M. Mery.* Then sing we to dinner.

*Here they sing, and go out singing.*

## Actus. j. Scæna. v.

*Christian Eustance. Margerie Mumblecrust.*

*E. Eustance.*



Ho tooke thee thys letter  
Margerie Mumblecrust?

*M. Mumbl.* A lustie gay  
bacheler tooke it me of  
trust,

And if ye seeke to him he will lowe your doing.

*E. Eustance.* Yea, but where learned he that man-  
ner of wowing? [take,

*M. Mumbl.* If to sue to hym, you will any paines  
He will haue you to his wife (he sayth) for my sake.

*E. Eustance.* Some wise gentleman belike. I am  
bespoken :

And I thought verily thys had bene some token [please  
From my dere spouse Gawin Goodluck, whom when him  
God luckily sende home to both our heartes ease.

*M. Mumbl.* A ioyly man it is I wote well by report,  
And would haue you to him for marriage resort :  
Best open the writing, and see what it doth speake.

*E. Eustance.* At thys time nourse I will neither  
reade ne breake.

*M. Mumbl.* He promised to giue you a whole  
pecke of golde. [shall be all tolde.

*E. Eustance.* Perchaunce lacke of a pynte when it

*M. Mumbl.* I would take a gay riche husbände,  
and I were you. [if I were thou.

*E. Eustance.* In good sooth Madge, een so would I,  
But no more of this fond talke now, let vs go in,  
And see thou no more moue me folly to begin.  
Nor bring mee no mo letters for no mans pleasure,  
But thou know from whom.

*M. Mumbl.* I warrant ye shall be sure.

## Actus. ij. Scæna. j.

Dobinet Boughtie.

D. Bought.



Here is the house I goe  
to, before or behinde?  
I know not where nor  
when nor how I shal  
it finde.

If I had ten mens bodies  
and legs and strength,  
This trotting that I haue

must needes lame me at length.

And nowe that my maister is new set on wowyng,  
I trust there shall none of vs finde lacke of doying:  
Two paire of shoes a day will nowe be too litle  
To serue me, I must trotte to and fro so mickle.  
Go beare me thys token, carrie me this letter,  
Nowe this is the best way, nowe that way is better.  
Vp before day sirs, I charge you, an houre or twaine,  
Trudge, do me thys message, and bring worde quicke  
again,

If one misse but a minute, then his armes and woundes,  
I woulde not haue slacked for ten thousand poundes.  
Nay see I beseeche you, if my most trustie page,  
Goe not nowe aboute to hinder my mariage,  
So feruent hotte wowyng, and so farre from wiuing,  
I trowe neuer was any creature liuyng,  
With euery woman is he in some loues pang,  
Then vp to our lute at midnight, twangledome twang,  
Then twang with our sonets, and twang with our dumps,  
And heyhough from our heart, as heauie as lead lumpes:  
Then to our recorder with toodleloodle poope  
As the howlet out of an yuie bushe should hoope.  
Anon to our gitterne, thrumpledum, thrumpledum thrum,  
Thrumpledum, thrumpledum, thrumpledum, thrumple-  
Of Songs and Balades also he is a maker, [dum thrum.  
And that can he as finely doe as lacke Raker,  
Yea and *extempore* will he dities compose,

Foolishe *Marsias* nere made the like I suppose,  
 Yet must we sing them, as good stuffe I vndertake,  
 As for such a pen man is well fittyng to make.  
 Ah for these long nights, heyhow, when will it be day?  
 I feare ere I come she will be wowed away.  
 Then when aunswere is made that it may not bee,  
 O death why comcest thou not? by and by (sayth he)  
 But then, from his heart to put away sorowe,  
 He is as farre in with some newe loue next morowe.  
 But in the meane season we trudge and we trot,  
 From dayspring to midnyght, I sit not, nor rest not.  
 And now am I sent to dame Christian Custance:  
 But I feare it will ende with a mocke for pastance.  
 I bring hir a ring, with a token in a cloute,  
 And by all gesse, this same is hir house out of doute.  
 I knowe it nowe perfect, I am in my right way.  
 And loe yond the olde nurse that was wyth vs last day.

## Actus. ij. Scæna. ij.

*Mage Mumblecrust. Dobinet Doughtie.*

*M. Mumb.*



Was nere so shoke vp afore  
 since I was borne,  
 That our mistresse coulde  
 not haue chid I wold  
 haue sworne:

And I pray God I die if I ment any harme,  
 But for my life time this shall be to me a charme.

*D. Dough.* God you saue and see nurse, and howe  
 is it with you? [suche as thou.

*M. Mumb.* Mary a great deale the worse it is for

*D. Dough.* For me? Why so?

*M. Mumb.* Why wer not thou one of them, say,  
 That song and playde here with the gentleman last  
 day? [him spoken.

*D. Dough.* Yes, and he would know if you haue for  
 And prayes you to deliuer this ring and token. [brother,

*M. Mumb.* Nowe by the token that God tokened

I will deliuer no token one nor other.  
 I haue once ben so shent for your maisters pleasure,  
 As I will not be agayne for all hys treasure.

**D. Dough.** He will thank you woman.

**M. Mumb.** I will none of his thanke. *Ex.*

**D. Dough.** I weene I am a prophete, this geare will  
 proue blanke :

But what should I home againe without answere go?  
 It were better go to *Rome* on my head than so.  
 I will tary here this moneth, but some of the house  
 Shall take it of me, and then I care not a louse.  
 But yonder commeth forth a wenche or a ladde,  
 If he haue not one Lumbardes touche, my lucke is bad.

## Actus. ij. Scæna. iij.

*Truopenie.* **D. Dough.** *Tibet T.* *Anot Al.*

**Truopeny.**



Am cleane lost for lacke of  
 mery companie,

We gree not halfe well within,  
 our wenches and I,

They will commaunde like  
 mistresies, they will forbyd,

If they be not serued, Truopeny must be chyd.

Let them be as mery nowe as ye can desire,  
 With turnyng of a hande, our mirth lieth in the mire,  
 I can not skill of such chaungeable mettelle,  
 There is nothing with them but in docke out nettlo.

**D. Dough.** Whether is it better that I speake to him  
 Or he first to me, it is good to cast the wurst. [*furst*,  
 If I beginne first, he will smell all my purpose,  
 Otherwise I shall not neede any thing to disclose.

**Truopeny.** What boy haue we yonder? I will see  
 what he is. [*ywis.*

**D. Dough.** He commeth to me. It is hereabout

**Truopeny.** Wouldest thou ought friende, that thou  
 lookest so about? [*no, I dout.*

**D. Dough.** Yea, but whether ye can helpe me or

I seeke to one mistresse Custance house here dwellyng.

*Trupenie.* It is my mistresse ye seeke too by your telling.

*D. Dough.* Is there any of that name heere but shee?

*Trupenie.* Not one in all the whole towne that I knowe pardee.

*D. Dough.* A Widowe she is I trow.

*Trupenie.* And what and she be?

*D. Dough.* But ensured to an husbände.

*Trupenie.* Yea, so thinke we.

*D. Dough.* And I dwell with hir husbände that trusteth to be.

*Trupenie.* In faith then must thou needes be welcome to me,

Let vs for acquaintance shake handes together,  
And what ere thou be, heartily welcome hither.

*Tib. Talk.* Well *Trupenie* neuer but flinging.

*An. Alyface.* And frisking? [and whiskyng?

*Trupenie.* Well *Tibet* and *Annot*, still swingyng

*Tib. Talk.* But ye roile abroad.

*An. Alyface.* In the streete euere where.

*Trupenie.* Where are ye twaine, in chambers when ye mete me there?

But come hither fooles, I haue one now by the hande,  
Seruant to hym that must be our mistresse husbände,  
Byd him welcome.

*An. Alyface.* To me truly is he welcome. [come.

*Tib. Talk.* Forsooth and as I may say, heartily wel-

*D. Dough.* I thank you mistresse maides

*An. Alyface.* I hope we shal better know

*Tib. Talk.* And when wil our new master come.

*D. Dough.* Shortly I trow. [resorte

*Tib. Talk.* I would it were to morow: for till he  
Our mistresse being a Widow hath small comforte,  
And I hearde our nourse speake of an husbände to day  
Ready for our mistresse, a riche man and a gay,  
And we shall go in our frenchie hoodes euery day,  
In our silke cassocks (I warrant you) freshe and gay,  
In our tricke serdegews and billiments of golde,  
Braue in our futes of chaunge seuen double folde.  
Then shall ye see *Tibet* sirs, treade the mosse so trinne.

Nay, why sayd I treade? ye shall see hir glide and swimme,

Not lumperdee clumperdee like our spaniell Rig. [fig,  
 Trupeny. Mary then prickmedaintie come toste me a  
 Who shall then know our Tib Talke apace trow ye?

An. Alyface. And why not Annot Alyface as fyne  
 as she? [none?

Trupeny. And what had Tom Trupeny, a father or

An. Alyface. Then our pretie newe come man will  
 looke to be one. [knot.

Trupeny. We foure I trust shall be a ioily mery  
 Shall we sing a fitte to welcome our friende, Annot?

An. Alyface. Perchaunce he can not sing.

D. Bough. I am at all assaies. [alwayes.

Tib. Talk. By cocke and the better welcome to vs

*Here they sing.*

A thing very fitte	No man for despite,
For them that haue witte,	By worde or by write
And are felowes knitte	His felowe to twite,
Seruants in one house to bee,	But further in honestie,
Is fast fast for to fitte,	No good turnes entwite,
And not oft to flitte,	Nor olde fores recite,
Nor varie a whitte,	But let all goe quite,
But louingly to agree.	And louingly to agree.

No man complainyng,	After drudgerie,
Nor other disdayning,	When they be werie,
For losse or for gainyng,	Then to be merie, [free
But felowes or friendsto bee.	To laugh and sing they be
No grudge remainyng,	With chip and cherie
No worke refrainyng,	Heigh derie derie,
Nor helpe refrainyng,	Trill on the berie,
But louingly to agree.	And louingly to agree.

*Finis.*

Tib. Talk. Wyll you now in with vs vnto our mis-  
 tresse go? [two.

D. Bough. I haue first for my maister an errand or  
 But I haue here from him a token and a ring, [bring.  
 They shall haue moste thanke of hir that first doth it

*Tib. Talk.* Mary that will I.

*Trupeny.* See and Tibet snatch not now.

*Tib. Talk.* And why may not I sir, get thanks as well as you? *Exeat.* [you both.

*An. Alyface.* Yet get ye not all, we will go with And haue part of your thanks be ye neuer so loth. *Exeant omnes.*

*B. Bough.* So my handes are ridde of it : I care for no more.

I may now return home : so durst I not afore. *Exeat.*

## Actus. ij. Scæna. iiij.

*C. Custance.* *Tibet.* *Annot Alyface.* *Trupeny.*

*C. Custance.*  Ay come forth all three : and come hither pretie mayde :

Will not so many forewarnings make you afraide?

*Tib. Talk.* Yes forsoth.

*C. Custance.* But stil be a runner vp and downe Still be a bringer of tidings and tokens to towne.

*Tib. Talk.* No forsoth mistresse.

*C. Custance.* Is all your delite and ioy In whiskyng and ramping abroad like a Tom boy.

*Tib. Talk.* Forsoth these were there too, Annot and Trupenie. [denie.

*Trupenie.* Yea but ye alone tooke it, ye can not Annot Aly. Yea that ye did.

*Tibet.* But if I had not, ye twaine would.

*C. Custance.* You great calse ye should haue more witte, so ye should :

But why shoulde any of you take such things in hande?

*Tibet.* Because it came from him that must be your

*C. Custance.* How do ye know that? [husbande.

*Tibet.* Forsoth the boy did say so.

*C. Custance.* What was his name?

*An. Alyface.* We asked not.

*C. Custance.* No did?

*Roister Doister.*

An. Alifare. He is not farre gone of likelyhod.

Trupeny. I will see. [bring him to me.

C. Custance. If thou canst finde him in the streete

Trupenie. Yes. *Exeat.*

C. Custance. Well ye naughty girles, if euer I percciue  
That henceforth you do letters or tokens receiue,  
To bring vnto me from any person or place,  
Except ye first shewe me the partie face to face,  
Eyther thou or thou, full truiy abyce thou shalt.

Tibet. Pardon this, and the next tyme poudre me  
in salt. [to beware.

C. Custance. I shall make all girles by you twaine

Tibet. If euer I offende againe do not me spare.

But if euer I see that false boy any more  
By your mistreshyps licence I tell you afore  
I will rather haue my cote twentie times swinged,  
Than on the naughtie wag not to be auenged.

C. Custance. Good wenches would not so rampe  
abrode ydelly,

But keepe within doores, and plie their work earnestly,  
If one would speake with me that is a man likely,  
Ye shall haue right good thanke to bring me worde  
But otherwyse with messages to come in post [quickly.  
From henceforth I promise you, shall be to your cost.  
Get you in to your work.

Tib. An. Yes forsoth.

C. Custance. Hence both twaine.

And let me see you play me such a part againe.

Trupeny. Maistresse, I haue runne past the farre  
ende of the streete,

Yet can I not yonder crastie boy see nor meete.

C. Custance. No?

Trupeny. Yet I looked as farre beyonde the people.  
As one may see out of the toppe of Paules steeple.

C. Custance. Hence in at doores, and let me no  
more be vext. [the next.

Trupeny. Forgeue me this one fault, and lay on for

C. Custance. Now will I in too, for I thinke so God  
me mende,

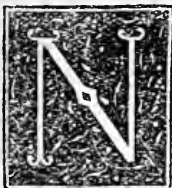
This will proue some foolishe matter in the ende. *Exeat.*



Actus. [i]ij. Scæna. j.

*Mathewe Merygreeke.*

*M. Mery.*



Owe say thys againe :  
he hath somewhat  
to dooing  
Which followeth the  
trace of one that  
is wowing,  
Specially that hath no  
more wit in his  
hedde,

Than my cousin Roister Doister withall is ledde.  
I am sent in all haste to espie and to marke  
How our letters and tokens are likely to warke.  
Maister Roister Doister must haue aunswere in haste  
For he loueth not to spende much labour in waste.  
Nowe as for Christian Custance by this light,  
Though she had not hir trowth to Gawin Goodluck plight,  
Yet rather than with such a loutishe dolte to marie,  
I dare say woulde lyue a poore lyfe solitarie,  
But sayne would I speake with Custance if I wist how  
To laugh at the matter, yond commeth one forth now.

Actus. iij. Scæna. ij.

*Tibet. M. Merygreeke. Christian Custance.*

*Tib. Talk.*



H that I might but once in  
my life haue a sight  
Of him that made vs all so  
yell shent by this light,  
He should neuer escape if I  
had him by the care,

But euen from his head, I would it bite or teare.  
Vea and if one of them were not inowe,

*Roister Doister.*

I would bite them both off, I make God auow.

*M. Mery.* What is he, whome this little mouse doth so threaten?

*Tib. Talk.* I woulde teache him I trow, to make girles shent or beaten.

*M. Mery.* I will call hir: Maide with whome are ye so hastie? [pastie,

*Tib. Talk.* Not with you <sup>hir</sup> fir, but with a little wag-  
A deceiuer of folkes, by subtill craft and guile.

*M. Mery.* I knowe where she is: Dobinet hath wrought some wile. [sayd was sent

*Tib. Talk.* He brought a ring and token which he  
From our dames husbände, but I wot well I was shent:  
For it liked hir as well to tell you no lies,  
As water in hir shyppe, or salt cast in hir eies:  
And yet whence it came neyther we nor she can tell.

*M. Mery.* We shall haue sport anone: I like this very well.

And dwell ye here with mistresse Custance faire maide?

*Tib. Talk.* Yea mary doe I fir: what would ye haue sayd?

*M. Mery.* A little message vnto hir by worde of mouth. [forsoth.

*Tib. Talk.* No messages by your leaue, nor tokens

*M. Mery.* Then help me to speke with hir.

*Tibet.* With a good wil that.

Here she commeth forth. Now speake ye know best what.

*C. Custance.* None other life with you maide, but  
abrode to skip? [your mistressship.

*Tib. Talk.* Forsoth here is one would speake with

*C. Custance.* Ah, haue ye ben learning of mo mes-  
sages now?

*Tib. Talk.* I would not heare his minde, but bad  
him shewe it to you.

*C. Custance.* In at dores.

*Tib. Talk.* I am gon.

*Ex.*

*M. Mery.* Dame Custance god ye faue.

*C. Custance.* Welcome friend Merygreeke: and  
what thing wold ye haue? [breake.

*M. Mery.* I am come to you a little matter to

**C. Custance.** But see it be honest, else better not to speake. [of late?

**M. Mery.** Howe feele ye your selfe affected here

**C. Custance.** I feele no maner chaunge but after  
But wherby do ye meane? [the olde rate.

**M. Mery.** Concerning mariage.

Doth not loue lade you?

**C. Custance.** I feele no such cariage.

**M. Mery.** Doe ye feele no pangues of dotage?  
aunswere me right. [the night

**C. Custance.** I dote so, that I make but one sleepe all  
But what neede all these wordes?

**M. Mery.** Oh Iesus, will ye see  
What dissembling creatures these same women be?  
The gentleman ye wote of, whome ye doe so loue,  
That ye woulde sayne marrie him, yf ye durst it moue,  
Emong other riche widowes, which are of him glad,  
Lest ye for lesing of him perchaunce might runne mad,  
Is nowe contented that vpon your sute making,  
Ye be as one in election of taking.

**C. Custance.** What a tale is this? that I wote of?  
whome I loue?

**M. Mery.** Yea and he is as louing a worrne againe  
as a doue.

Een of very pitie he is willyng you to take,  
Bicause ye shall not destroy your selfe for his sake.

**C. Custance.** Mary God yelde his mashep what euer  
It is gentmanly spoken. [he be,

**M. Mery.** Is it not trowe ye?

If ye haue the grace now to offer your self, ye speede.

**C. Custance.** As muche as though I did, this time  
it shall not neede,

But what gentman is it, I pray you tell me plaine,  
That woveth so finely?

**M. Mery.** Lo where ye be againe,  
As though ye knewe him not.

**C. Custance.** Tush ye speake in iest.

**M. Mery.** Nay sure, the partie is in good knocking  
earnest,

*Roister Doister.*

And haue you he will (he sayth) and haue you he must.

*C. Custance.* I am promised duryng my life, that is iust.

*M. Mery.* Mary so thinketh he, vnto him alone.

*C. Custance.* No creature hath my faith and trouth  
but one,

That is Gawin Goodlucke : and if it be not hee,

He hath no tittle this way what euer he be,

Nor I know none to whome I haue such worde spoken.

*M. Mery.* Ye knowe him not you by his letter and  
token?

*C. Custance.* In dede true it is, that a letter I haue,  
But I neuer reade it yet as God me faue.

*M. Mery.* Ye a woman? and your letter so long  
vnredde.

*C. Custance.* Ye may therby know what hast I haue  
to wedde.

But now who it is, for my hande I knowe by gesse.

*M. Mery.* Ah well I say.

*C. Custance.* It is Roister Doister doubtlesse.

*M. Mery.* Will ye neuer leaue this dissimulation?  
Ye know hym not.

*C. Custance.* But by imagination,  
For no man there is but a very dolt and loute  
That to woue a Widowe woulde so go about.  
He shall neuer haue me hys wife while he doe liue.

*M. Mery.* Then will he haue you if he may, so  
mote I thriue,

And he biddeth you sende him worde by me,  
That ye humbly beseech him, ye may his wife be,  
And that there shall be no let in you nor mistrust,  
But to be wedded on sunday next if he lust,  
And biddeth you to looke for him.

*C. Custance.* Doth he byd so?

*M. Mery.* When he commeth, aske hym whether  
he did or no?

*C. Custance.* Goe say, that I bid him keepe him  
warne at home

For if he come abroade, he shall cough me a mome.  
My mynde was vexed, I shrew his head sottish dolt.

*M. Mery.* He hath in his head.

**C. Custance.** As much braine as a burbolt.

**M. Mery.** Well dame Custance, if he heare you thus

**C. Custance.** What will he? [play choploge.

**M. Mery.** Play the deuill in the horologe.

**C. Custance.** I desye him loute.

**M. Mery.** Shall I tell hym what ye say?

**C. Custance.** Yea and adde what so euer thou canst,  
I thee pray,

And I will auouche it what so euer it bee.

**M. Mery.** Then let me alone we will laugh well  
ye shall see,

It will not be long ere he will hither reforte.

**C. Custance.** Let hym come when hym lust, I wishe  
no better sport.

Fare ye well, I will in, and read my great letter.

I shall to my wower make answere the better. *Exeat.*

## Actus. iij. Scaena. iij.

*Mathew Merygreeke. Roister Doister.*

**M. Mery.**



Owe that the whole answere  
in my deuise doth rest,

I shall paint out our wower  
in colours of the best.

And all that I say shall be on  
Custances mouth,

She is author of all that I shall speake forsoth.

But yond commeth Roister Doister nowe in a traunce.

**R. Roister.** *Iuno* sende me this day good lucke and  
good chaunce.

I can not but come see how Merygreeke doth speede.

**M. Mery.** I will not see him, but giue him a iutte  
I crie your mastershypp mercie. [in deede.

**R. Roister.** And whither now? [you.

**M. Mery.** As fast as I could runne fir in poste against  
But why speake ye so faintly, or why are ye so sad?

# Roister Doister.

**R. Royster.** Thou knowest the prouerbe, bycause I can not be had.

Hast thou spoken with this woman?

**M. Mery.** Yea that I haue.

**R. Royster.** And what will this geare be?

**M. Mery.** No so God me saue.

**R. Royster.** Hast thou a flat answer?

**M. Mery.** Nay a sharp answer.

**R. Royster.** What [hir cat.

**M. Mery.** Ye shall not (she sayth) by hir will marry

Ye are such a calfe, such an asse, such a blocke,

Such a lilburne, such a hoball, such a lobcocke,

And bicause ye shoulde come to hir at no season,

She despised your maship out of all reason.

Bawawe what ye say (ko I) of such a ientman,

Nay I teare him not (ko she) doe the best he can.

He vaunteth him selfe for a man of prowesse greate,

Where as a good gander I dare say may him beate.

And where he is louted and laughed to skorne,

For the veriest dolte that euer was borne,

And veriest lubber, slouen and beast,

Liuing in this worlde from the west to the east:

Yet of himselfe hath he suche opinion,

That in all the worlde is not the like minion.

He thinketh eche woman to be brought in dotage

With the onely sight of his goodly personage: [flocke,

Yet none that will haue hym: we do hym loute and

And make him among vs, our common sporting flocke,

And so would I now (ko she) saue onely bicause,

Better nay (ko I) I lust not medle with dawes.

Ye are happy (ko I) that ye are a woman,

This would cost you your life in case ye were a man.

**R. Royster.** Yea an hundred thousand pound should  
not saue hir life. [your wife,

**M. Mery.** No but that ye woue hir to haue hir to  
But I coulde not stoppe hir mouth.

**R. Royster.** Heigh how alas,

**M. Mery.** Be of good cheere man, and let the  
worlde passe. [not bee.

**R. Royster.** What shall I doe or say now that it will

M. Mery. Ye shall haue choise of a thousande as good as shee,

And ye must pardon hir, it is for lacke of witte.

R. Royster. Yea, for were not I an husbände for Well what should I now doe? [hir fitte?

M. Mery. In faith I can not tell.

R. Royster. I will go home and die.

M. Mery. Then shall I bidde toll the bell?

R. Royster. No.

M. Mery. God haue mercie on your soule, ah good gentleman,

That er ye shuld th[us] dye for an vnkinde woman, Will ye drinke once ere ye goe.

R. Roister. No, no, I will none.

M. Mery. How feelee your soule to God.

R. Roister. I am nigh gone.

M. Mery. And shall we hence streight?

R. Royster. Yea.

M. Mery. *Placebo dilexi.* [ut infra.\*

Maister Doister Doister will streight go home and die.

R. Royster. Heigh how, alas, the pangs of death my hearte do breake.

M. Mery. Holde your peace for shame sir, a dead man may not speake. [haue?

*Nequando*: What mourners and what torches shall we

R. Royster. None. [graue,

M. Mery. *Dirige*. He will go darklyng to his *Neque, lux, neque crux, neque* mourners, *neque* clinke, He will scale to heauen, ynknowing to God I thinke. *A porta inferi*, who shall your goodes possesse?

R. Royster. Thou shalt be my sectour, and haue all more and lesse.

M. Mery. *Requiem aeternam*. Now God reward your mastershyp.

And I will crie halfe penie doale for your worshyp.

Come forth sirs, heare the dolefull newes

I shall you tell.

Our good maister here will no longer with vs dwell,

*Exeunt serui, militis.*

## Roister Doister.

But in spite of Custance, which hath hym wried,  
 Let vs see his mashyp solemnely buried.  
 And while some piece of his soule is yet hym within,  
 Some part of his funeralls let vs here begin. [man,  
*Audiui vocem*, All men take heede by this one gentle-  
 Howe you sette your loue vpon an vnkinde woman.  
 For these women be all such madde pieuishe elues,  
 They will not be wonne except it please them selues.  
 But in sayth Custance if euer ye come in hell,  
 Maister Roister Doister shall serue you as well.  
 And will ye needes go from vs thus in very deede?

R. Royster. Yea in good sadnesse?

M. Mery. Now Iesus Christ be your speede.  
 Good night Roger olde knaue, farewell Roger olde  
 knaue,

Good night Roger olde knaue, knaue krap. *ut infra.\**  
 Pray for the late maister Roister Doisters soule,  
 And come forth parish Clarke, let the passing bell toll.  
 Pray for your mayster firs, and for  
 hym ring a peale. *Ad seruos mi-  
litis.*

He was your right good maister while he was in heale  
*Qui Lazarum.*

R. Royster. Heigh how.

M. Mery. Dead men go not so fast  
*In Paradisum.*

R. Royster. Heihow.

M. Mery. Soft, heare what I haue cast

R. Royster. I will heare nothing, I am past.

M. Mery. Whough, wellaway.

Ye may tarie one houre, and heare what I shall say,  
 Ye were best fir for a while to reuiue againe,  
 And quite them er ye go.

R. Royster. Trowest thou so?

M. Mery. Ye plain.

R. Royster. How may I reuiue being now so farre  
 past?

M. Mery. I will rubbe your temples, and sette you  
 againe at last.

R. Royster. It will not be possible.



**M. Mery.** Yes for twentie pounce.

**R. Royster.** Armes what dost thou?

**M. Mery.** Fet you again out of your sound  
By this crosse ye were nigh gone in decde, I might feele  
Your soule departing within an inche of your heele.  
Now folow my counsell.

**R. Royster.** What is it?

**M. Mery.** If I wer you,  
Custance should est seeke to me, ere I woulde bowe.

**R. Royster.** Well, as thou wilt haue me, euen so  
will I doe.

**M. Mery.** Then shall ye reuiue againe for an houre  
or two.

**R. Royster.** As thou wilt I am content for a little  
space.

**M. Mery.** Good.happe is not hastie : yet in space  
com[er]th grace,

To speake with Custance your selfe shoulde be very  
well,

What good therof may come, nor I, nor you can tell.

But now the matter standeth vpon your mariage,

Ye must now take vnto you a lustie courage.

Ye may not speake with a faint heart to Custance,

But with a lusty breast and countenance,

That she may knowe she hath to answere to a man.

**R. Royster.** Yes I can do that as well as any can.

**M. Mery.** Then bicause ye must Custance face to  
face woue,

Let vs see how to behaue your selfe ye can doe.

Ye must haue a portely bragge after your estate.

**R. Royster.** Tushe, I can handle that after the best  
rate.

**M. Mery.** Well done, so loe, vp man with your  
head and chin,

Vp with that snoute man : so loe, nowe ye begin,

So, that is somewhat like, but prankie cote, nay whan,

That is a lustie brute, handes vnder your side man :

So loe, now is it euen as it should bee,

That is somewhat like, for a man of your degree.

Then must ye stately goe, ietting vp and downe,

*Roister Doister.*

Tut, can ye no better shake the taile of your gowne?  
There loe, suche a lustie bragge it is ye must make.

**R. Royster.** To come behind, and make curtsie,  
thou must som pains take.

**M. Mery.** Else were I much to blame, I thanke  
your mastershyps.

The lorde one day all to begrime you with worshyp,  
Backe fir sauce, let gentlesfolkes haue elbowe roome,  
Voyde sirs, see ye not maister Roister Doister come?  
Make place my maisters.

**R. Royster.** Thou instleest nowe to nigh.

**M. Mery.** Back al rude loutes.

**R. Royster.** Tush.

**M. Mery.** I crie your maship mercy  
Hoighdagh, if faire fine mistresse Custance sawe you now,  
Ralph Royster Doister were hir owne I warrant you.

**R. Royster.** Neare an M by your girdle?

**M. Mery.** Your good mastershyps  
Mastershyps, were hir owne Mistreshyps mistreshyps,  
Ye were take vp for haukes, ye were gone, ye were gone,  
But now one other thing more yet I thinke vpon.

**R. Royster.** Shewe what it is.

**M. Mery.** A wower be he neuer so poore  
Must play and sing before his bestbeloues doore,  
How much more than you?

**R. Royster.** Thou speakest wel out of dout.

**M. Mery.** And perchaunce that woulde make hir  
the sooner come out.

**R. Royster.** Goe call my Musitians, bydde them  
high apace.

**M. Mery.** I wyll be here with them ere ye can say  
trey ace. *Excat.*

**R. Royster.** This was well sayde of Merygreeke, I  
lowe hys wit,

Before my sweete hearts dore we will haue a fit,  
That if my loue come forth, that I may with hir talke,  
I doubt not but this geare shall on my side walke.  
But lo, how well Merygreeke is returned sence.

**M. Mery.** There hath grown no grasse on my hecle  
since I went hence,

Lo here haue I brought that shall make you pastance.

**R. Royster.** Come firs let vs sing to winne my deare loue Cuslance.

*Content.*

**M. Mery.** Lo where she commeth, some counten aunce to hir make

And ye shall heare me be plaine with hir for your sake.

Actus. iiij. Scæna. iiij.

Custance. Merygrecke. Roister Doister.

**C. Custance.**



That gaudyng and foolyng is this afore my doore?

**M. Mery.** May not folks be honest, pray you, though they be pore?

**C. Custance.** As that thing may be true, so rich folks may be fooles,

**R. Royster.** Hir talke is as fine as she had learned in schooles.

**M. Mery.** Looke partly towarde hir, and drawe a little nere.

**C. Custance.** Get ye home idle folkes.

**M. Mery.** Why may not we be here?

Nay and ye will haze, haze: otherwise I tell you plaine, And ye will not haze, then giue vs our geare againe.

**C. Custance.** In deede I haue of yours much gay things God saue all.

**R. Royster.** Speake gently vnto hir, and let hir take all.

**M. Mery.** Ye are to tender hearted: shall she make vs dawes? [cause.

Nay dame, I will be plaine with you in my friends

**R. Royster.** Let all this passe sweete heart and accept my seruice.

*Roister Doister.*

C. Custance. I will not be serued with a foole in  
no wise,

When I choose an husbände I hope to take a man.

M. Mery. And where will ye finde one which can  
doe that he can?

Now thys man towarde you being so kinde, [minde.  
You not to make him an answere somewhat to his

C. Custance. I sent him a full answere by you dyd  
I not?

M. Mery. And I reported it.

C. Custance. Nay I must speake it againe.

R. Royster. No no, he tolde it all.

M. Mery. Was I not metely plaine?

R. Royster. Yes.

M. Mery. But I would not tell all, for faith if I had  
With you dame Custance ere this houre it had been  
bad,

And not without cause : for this goodly personage,  
Ment no lesse than to ioyne with you in mariage.

C. Custance. Let him wast no more labour nor sute  
about me. [lieth I see,

M. Mery. Ye know not where your preferment  
He sending you such a token, ring and letter.

C. Custance. Mary here it is, ye neuer sawe a better.

M. Mery. Let vs see your letter.

C. Custance. Holde, reade it if ye can.

And see what letter it is to winne a woman.

M. Mery. To mine owne deare coney birde, swete  
heart, and pigfny

Good Mistresse Custance present these by and by,  
Of this superscription do ye blame the stile?

C. Custance. With the rest as good stufte as ye  
redde a great while.

M. Mery. Sweete mistresse where as I loue you  
nothing at all,

Regarding your substance and richesse chiefe of all,  
For your personage, beautie, demeanour and wit,  
I commende me vnto you neuer a whit.

Sorie to heare report of your good welfare.

For (as I heare say) suche your conditions are.

That ye be worthie fauour of no liuing man,  
 To be abhorred of euery honest man.  
 To be taken for a woman enclined to vice.  
 Nothing at all to Vertue gyuing hir due price.  
 Wherefore concerning mariage, ye are thought  
 Suche a fine Paragon, as nere honest man bought.  
 And nowe by these presentes I do you aduertise  
 That I am minded to marrie you in no wise.  
 For your goodes and substance, I coulde bee content  
 To take you as ye are. If ye mynde to bee my wyfe,  
 Ye shall be assured for the tyme of my lyfe,  
 I will keepe ye ryght well, from good rayment and fare,  
 Ye shall not be kepte but in sorowe and care.  
 Ye shall in no wyse lyue at your owne libertie,  
 Doe and say what ye lust, ye shall neuer please me,  
 But when ye are mery, I will be all sadde,  
 When ye are sory, I will be very gladde.  
 When ye seeke your heartes ease, I will be ynkinde,  
 At no tyme, in me shall ye muche gentlenesse finde.  
 But all things contrary to your will and minde,  
 Shall be done: otherwise I wyll not be behinde  
 To speake. And as for all them that woulde do you wrong  
 I will so helpe and mainteyne, ye shall not lyue long.  
 Nor any so dishe dolte, shall cumbre you but I.  
 I, who ere say nay, uyll sticke by you tyll I die,  
 Thus good mistresse Custance, the lorde you saue and  
 kepe,

From me Roister Doister, whether I wake or slepe.  
 Who fauoureth you no lesse, (ye may be bolde)  
 Than this letter purporteth, which ye haue vnfolde.

**C. Custance.** Howe by this letter of loue? is it not  
 fine? [myne.]

**R. Roister.** By the armes of Caleys it is none of

**M. Mery.** Fie you are slowe to blame this is your  
 owne hand.

**C. Custance.** Might not a woman be proude of  
 such an husbände?

**M. Mery.** Ah that ye would in a letter shew such  
 despite.

**R. Roister.** Oh I would I had hym here, the which  
 did it endite.

# Roister Doister.

**M. Mery.** Why ye made it your selfe ye tolde me by this light.

**R. Royster.** Yea I ment I wrote it myne owne selfe yesternight.

**C. Custance.** Ywis sir, I would not haue sent you such a mocke.

**R. Royster.** Ye may so take it, but I ment it not so by cocke.

**M. Mery.** Who can blame this woman to fume and frette and rage?

Tut, tut, your selfe nowe haue marde your owne marriage.

Well, yet mistresse Custance, if ye can this remitte,  
This gentleman other wise may your loue requitte.

**C. Custance.** No God be with you both, and seeke no more to me. *Exeat.*

**R. Royster.** Wough, she is gone for euer, I shall hir no more see.

**M. Mery.** What weepe? fye for shame, and blubber? for manhods sake,

Neuer lette your foe so muche pleasure of you take.

Rather play the mans parte, and doe loue refraine.

If she despise you een despise ye hir againe.

**R. Royster.** By gosse and for thy sake I desye hir in deede.

**M. Mery.** Yea and perchaunce that way ye shall much sooner speede,

For one madde propertie these women haue in fey,  
When ye will, they will not: Will not ye, then will they.

Ah foolishhe woman, ah moste vnluckie Custance,

Ah vnfortunate woman, ah pieuishe Custance,

Art thou to thine harmes so obstinately bent,

That thou canst not see where lieth thine high preferment?

Canst thou not lub dis man, which couldde lub dee so  
Art thou so much thine own foe.

**R. Royster.** Thou dost the truth tell.

**M. Mery.** Wel I lament.

**R. Royster.** So do I.

**M. Mery.** Wherfor?

**R. Royster.** For this thing  
Bicause she is gone.

**M. Mery.** I mourne for an other thing.

**R. Royster.** What is it Merygreeke, wherfore thou  
dost grieffe take?

**M. Mery.** That I am not a woman myfelfe for your  
fake,

I would haue you my felfe, and a strawe for yond Gill,  
And mocke much of you though it were against my  
will.

I would not I warrant you, fall in fuch a rage,  
As fo to refuse fuche a goodly perfonage. [greeke.

**R. Royster.** In faith I heartily thanke thee Mery-

**M. Mery.** And I were a woman.

**R. Royster.** Thou wouldest to me feeke. [bee.

**M. Mery.** For though I say it, a goodly person ye

**R. Royster.** No, no.

**M. Mery.** Yes a goodly man as ere I dyd fee.

**R. Royster.** No, I am a poore homely man as God  
made mee.

**M. Mery.** By the faith that I owe to God fir, but  
ye bee.

Woulde I might for your fake, fpende a thoufande  
pound land.

**R. Royster.** I dare fay thou wouldest haue me to  
thy hufbande.

**M. Mery.** Yea: And I were the faireft lady in the  
fhier,

And knewe you as I know you, and fee you nowe here.  
Well I fay no more.

**R. Royster.** Gramercies with all my hart.

**M. Mery.** But fince that can not be, will ye play a

**R. Royster.** How fhould I? [wife parte?

**M. Mery.** Refraine from Cufance a while now.

And I warrant hir foone right glad to feeke to you,

Ye fhall fee hir anon come on hir knees creeping.

And pray you to be good to hir falte teares weeping.

**R. Royster.** But what and she come not?

**M. Mery.** In faith then farewell she.

Or elfe if ye be wroth, ye may auenged be.

*Roister Doister.*

**R. Royster.** By cocks precious potsticke, and een  
so I shall.

I wyll vterly destroy hir, and house and all,  
But I woulde be auenged in the meane space,  
On that vile scribler, that did my wowyng disgrace.

**M. Mery.** Scribler (ko you) in deede he is worthy  
no lesse.

I will call hym to you, and ye bidde me doubtlesse.

**R. Royster.** Yes, for although he had as many liues  
As a thousande widowes, and a thousande wiues,  
As a thousande lyons, and a thousand rattes,  
A thousande wolues, and a thousande cattes,  
A thousande bulles, and a thousande calues,  
And a thousande legions diuided in halues,  
He shall neuer scape death on my swordes point,  
Though I shoulde be torne therfore ioynt by ioynt.

**M. Mery.** Nay, if ye will kyll him, I will not sette  
him,

I will not in so muche extremitie sette him,  
He may yet amende sir, and be an honest man,  
Therefore pardon him good soule, as muche as ye can.

**R. Royster.** Well, for thy sake, this once with his  
lyfe he shall passe,  
But I wyll hewe hym all to pieces by the Masse.

**M. Mery.** Nay sayth ye shall promise that he shall  
no harme haue,

Else I will not set him.

**R. Royster.** I shall so God me faue.  
But I may chide him a good.

**M. Mery.** Yea that do hardely.

**R. Royster.** Go then.

**M. Mery.** I returne, and bring him to you by and  
by.

*Ex.*



Actus. iij. Scaena. v.

*Roister Doister. Mathewe Merygreeke. Scrinener.*

*R. Roister.*



What is a gentleman but his  
worde and his promise?

I must nowe saue this vilaines  
lyfe in any wise,

And yet at hym already my  
handes doe tickle,

I shall vneth holde them, they wyll be so sickle.

But lo and Merygreeke haue not brought him sens?

*M. Mery.* Nay I woulde I had of my purse payde  
fortie pens.

*Scriner.* So woulde I too: but it needed not that  
flounde,

*M. Mery.* But the ientman had rather spent fise  
thousande pounde,

For it disgraced him at least fise tymes so muche.

*Scriner.* He disgraced hym selfe, his loutishnesse  
is suche.

*R. Roister.* Howe long they stande prating? Why  
comst thou not away?

*M. Mery.* Come nowe to hymselfe, and hearke what  
he will say.

*Scriner.* I am not afrayde in his presence to ap-  
peare.

*R. Roister.* Arte thou come felow?

*Scriner.* How thinke you? am I not here?

*R. Roister.* What hindrance hast thou done me,  
and what villanie?

*Scriner.* It hath come of thy selfe, if thou hast  
had any.

*R. Roister.* All the stocke thou comest of later or  
rather,

From thy fyrst fathers grandfathers fathers father,

Nor all that shall come of thee to the worldes ende,

Though to three score generations they descende,

Can be able to make me a iust recompense,  
For this trespasse of thine and this one offense.

Scriuener. Wherin?

R. Royster. Did not you make me a letter brother?

Scriuener. Pay the like hire, I will make you suche  
an other.

R. Royster. Nay see and these whooreson Phariseys  
and Scribes

Doe not get their liuyng by polling and bribes.

If it were not for shame.

Scriuener. Nay holde thy hands still.

M. Mery. Why did ye not promise that ye would  
not him spill?

Scriuener. Let him not spare me.

R. Royster. Why wilt thou strike me again?

Scriuener. Ye shall haue as good as ye bring of me  
that is plaine.

M. Mery. I can not blame him sir, though your  
blowes wold him greue.

For he knoweth present death to ensue of all ye geue.

R. Royster. Well, this man for once hath purchased  
thy pardon. [gon.

Scriuener. And what say ye to me? or else I will be

R. Royster. I say the letter thou madest me was  
not good.

Scriuener. Then did ye wrong copy it of likelyhood.

R. Royster. Yes, out of thy copy worde for worde I  
wrote. [wote,

Scriuener. Then was it as ye prayed to haue it I

But in reading and pointyng there was made some faulte.

R. Royster. I wote not, but it made all my matter  
to haulte.

Scriuener. Howe say you, is this mine originall or  
no? [mote I go.

R. Royster. The selfe same that I wrote out of, so

Scriuener. Loke you on your owne fist, and I will  
looke on this,

And let this man be iudge whether I reade amisse.

To myne owne dere coney birde, sweete heart, and

Good mistresse Custance, present these by and by.  
How now? doth not this superscription agree?

*R. Royster.* ~~Reade that is within, and there ye shall~~  
the fault see.

*Scriuener.* Sweete mistresse, where as I loue you,  
nothing at all

Regarding your richesfe and substance: chiefe of all  
For your personage, beautie, demeanour and witte  
I commende me vnto you: Neuer a whitte

Sory to heare reporte of your good welfare.

For (as I heare say) suche your conditions are,

That ye be worthie fauour: Of no liuing man

To be abhorred: of euery honest man

To be taken for a woman enclined to vice

Nothing at all: to vertue giuing hir due price.

Wherefore concerning mariage, ye are thought

Suche a fine Paragon, as nere honest man bought.

And nowe by these presents I doe you aduertise,

That I am minded to marrie you: In no wyse

For your goodes and substance: I can be content

To take you as you are: yf ye will be my wife,

Ye shall be assured for the time of my life,

I wyll keepe you right well: from good raiment and fare,

Ye shall not be kept: but in sorowe and care

Ye shall in no wyse lyue: at your owne libertie,

Doe and say what ye lust: ye shall neuer please me

But when ye are merrie: I will bee all sadde

When ye are forie: I wyll be very gladde

When ye seeke your heartes ease: I will be vnkinde

At no time: in me shall ye muche gentlenesse finde.

But all things contrary to your will and minde

Shall be done otherwise: I wyll not be behynde

To speake: And as for all they that woulde do you wrong,

(I wyll so helpe and maintayne ye) shall not lyue long.

Nor any foolishhe dolte shall cumber you, but I,

I, who ere say nay, wyll sticke by you tyll I die.

Thus good mistresse Custance, the lorde you saue and  
kepe.

From me Roister Doister, whether I wake or slepe,

*Just  
appeale  
of chieftie  
letter*

*Roister Doister.*

Who fauoureth you no leffe, (ye may be bolde)  
 Than this letter purporteth, which ye haue vnfolde.  
 Now fir, what default can ye finde in this letter?

**R. Royster.** Of truth in my mynde there can not be  
 a better. [in writyng,

**Scriener.** Then was the fault in readyng, and not  
 No nor I dare say in the fourme of endityng,  
 But who read this letter, that it founded so nought?

**M. Mery.** I redde it in deede.

**Scriener.** Ye red it not as ye ought.

**R. Royster.** Why thou wretched villaine was all this  
 same fault in thee?

**M. Mery.** I knocke your costarde if ye offer to  
 strike me.

**R. Royster.** Strikest thou in deede? and I offer but  
 in iest? [sit in rest.

**M. Mery.** Yea and rappe you againe except ye can  
 And I will no longer tarie here me beleue.

**R. Royster.** What wilt thou be angry, and I do  
 thee forgeue?

Fare thou well scribler, I crie thee mercie in deede.

**Scriener.** Fare ye well bibbler, and worthily may  
 ye speede.

**R. Royster.** If it were an other but thou, it were a  
 knaue. [both saue,

**M. Mery.** Ye are an other your selfe fir, the lorde vs  
 Albeit in this matter I must your pardon craue,  
 Alas woulde ye wyshe in me the witte that ye haue?  
 But as for my fault I can quickly amende,  
 I will shewe Cufiance it was I that did offende.

**R. Royster.** By so doing hir anger may be reformed.

**M. Mery.** But if by no entreatie she will be turned,  
 Then sette lyght by hir and bee as testie as shee,  
 And doe your force vpon hir with extremitie.

**R. Roister.** Come on therefore lette vs go home in  
 sadnesse. [readinesse,

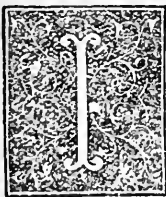
**M. Mery.** That if force shall neede all may be in a  
 And as for thys letter hardely let all go,  
 We wyl know where she refuse you for that or no.

[Exeant am.

Actus. iiij. Scæna. j.

*Sym Suresby.*

*Sim Sure.*



S there any man but  
I Sym Suresby  
alone,  
That would haue  
taken such an en-  
terprise him vpon,  
In suche an outra-  
gious tempest as  
as this was.

Suche a daungerous gulse of the sea to passe.  
I thinke verily *Neptunes* mightie godshyp,  
Was angry with some that was in our shyp,  
And but for the honestie which in me he founde,  
I thinke for the others fake we had bene drownde.  
But fye on that seruant which for his maisters wealth  
Will sticke for to hazarde both his lyfe and his health  
My maister Gawyn Goodlucke after me a day  
Bicause of the weather, thought best hys shyppe to stay,  
And now that I haue the rough sourges so well past,  
God graunt I may finde all things safe here at last.  
Then will I thinke all my trauaile well spent.  
Nowe the first poynt wherfore my maister hath me sent  
Is to salute dame Christian Custance his wife,  
Espoused: whome he tendreth no lesse than his life,  
I must see how it is with hir well or wrong,  
And whether for him she doth not now thinke long:  
Then to other friendes I haue a message or tway,  
And then so to returne and mete him on the way.  
Now wyll I goe knocke that I may dispatche with  
speede,  
But loe forth commeth hir selfe happily in deede.

*Actus. iiij. Scæna. ij.**Christian Custance. Sim. Suresby.**C. Custance.*

Come to see if any more  
 stirryng be here,  
 But what straunger is this,  
 which doth to me appere?  
*Sym Surs.* I will speake

to hir: Dame the lorde you saue and see.

*C. Custance.* What friende *Sym Suresby*? Forsoth  
 right welcome ye be,

Howe doth mine owne *Gawyn Goodlucke*, I pray the tell?

*S. Suresby.* When he knoweth of your health he  
 will be perfect well. [would be.

*C. Custance.* If he haue perfect helth, I am as I

*Sim. Sure.* Suche newes will please him well, this is  
 as it should be.

*C. Custance.* I thinke now long for him.

*Sym Sure.* And he as long for you.

*C. Custance.* When wil he be at home?

*Sym Sure.* His heart is here een now

His body commeth after.

*C. Custance.* I woulde see that faine. [a maine.

*Sim Sure.* As fast as wynde and sayle can cary it  
 But what two men are yonde comming hitherwarde?

*C. Custance.* Now I shrew their best *Christmasse*  
 chekes both togetherward.

*Actus. iiij. Scæna. iiij.*

*Christian Custance. Sym Suresby. Ralph*  
*Roister. Mathew Merygreke. Trupeny.*

*C. Custance.*

What meane these lewde  
 felowes thus to trouble  
 me stil?

*Sym Suresby* here perchance  
 shal therof deme som yll.

And shall suspect in me some point of naughtinesse,  
And they come hitherward.

*Sym Sure.* What is their businesse?

*C. Custance.* I haue nought to them, nor they to me in sadnesse.

*Sim Sure.* Let vs hearken them, somewhat there is I feare it.

*R. Royster.* I will speake out aloude best, that she may heare it.

*M. Mery.* Nay alas, ye may so feare hir out of hir wit. [hir no whit.

*R. Royster.* By the crosse of my sworde, I will hurt

*M. Mery.* Will ye doe no harme in deede, shall I trust your worde? [but in borde.

*R. Royster.* By Roister Doisters sayth I will speake

*Sim. Sure.* Let vs hearken them, somewhat there is I feare it. [heare it:

*R. Royster.* I will speake out aloude, I care not who  
Sirs, see that my harnesse, my tergat, and my shield,  
Be made as bright now, as when I was last in fielde,  
As white as I shoulde to warre againe to morrowe:  
For sicke shall I be, but I worke some folke sorow.  
Therefore see that all shine as bright as fainct George,  
Or as doth a key newly come from the Smiths forge.  
I woulde haue my sworde and harnesse to shine so bright,  
That I might therwith dimine mine enimies sight,  
I would haue it cast beames as fast I tell you playne,  
As doth the glittryng grasse after a showre of raine.  
And see that in case I shoulde neede to come to arm-  
All things may be ready at a minutes warning, [ing.  
For such chaunce may chaunce in an houre, do ye  
heare?

*M. Mery.* As perchance shall not chaunce againe  
in seuen yeare.

*R. Royster.* Now draw we neare to hir, and here  
what shall be sayde.

*M. Mery.* But I woulde not haue you make hir too  
muche asfayde.

*R. Royster.* Well founde sweete wife (I trust) for al  
this your soure looke.

*Roister Doister.*

**C. Custance.** Wife, why cal ye me wife?

**Sim Sure.** Wife? this gear goth acrook.

**M. Mery.** Nay mistresse Custance, I warrant you,  
our letter

Is not as we redde een nowe, but much better,  
And where ye halfe stomaked this gentleman afore,  
For this same letter, ye wyll loue hym now therefore,  
Nor it is not this letter, though ye were a queene,  
That shoulde breake marriage betweene you twaine I  
weene. [sake.

**C. Custance.** I did not refuse hym for the letters

**R. Royster.** Then ye are content me for your  
husbande to take.

**C. Custance.** You for my husbande to take? no-  
thing lesse truely.

**R. Royster.** Yea say so, sweete spouse, afore straun-  
gers hardly. [with me,

**M. Mery.** And though I haue here his letter of loue  
Yet his ryng and tokens he sent, keepe safe with ye.

**C. Custance.** A mischiefe take his tokens, and him  
and thee too.

But what prate I with fooles? haue I nought else to doo?  
Come in with me Sym Suresby to take some repast.

**Sim Sure.** I must ere I drinke by your leaue, goe  
in all hast,

To a place or two, with earnest letters of his.

**C. Custance.** Then come drink here with me.

**Sim Sure.** I thank you.

**C. Custance.** Do not misse

You shall haue a token to your maister with you.

**Sym Sure.** No tokens this time gramercies, God  
be with you. *Exeat.*

**C. Custance.** Surely this fellowe misdecemeth some  
yll in me.

Which thing but God helpe, will go neere to spill me.

**R. Royster.** Yea farewell fellow, and tell thy maister  
Goodlucke

That he commeth to late of thys blossome to plucke.  
Let him keepe him there still, or at least wise make no  
As for his labour hither he shall spende in wast. [hast.



His betters be in place nowe.

*M. Mery.* As long as it will hold.

*C. Custance.* I will be euen with thee thou beast,  
thou mayst be bolde.

*R. Royster.* Will ye haue vs then?

*C. Custance.* I will neuer haue thee.

*R. Royster.* Then will I haue you?

*C. Custance.* No, the deuill shal haue thee.

I haue gotten this houre more shame and harme by thee,  
Then all thy life days thou canst do me honestie.

*M. Mery.* Why nowe may ye see what it comth too  
in the ende,

To make a deadly foe of your most louing frende :  
And ywis this letter if ye woulde heare it now.

*C. Custance.* I will heare none of it.

*M. Mery.* In faith would rauishe you. [is cleare

*C. Custance.* He hath stained my name for euer this

*R. Royster.* I can make all as well in an houre.

*M. Mery.* As ten yeare.

How say ye, wil ye haue him?

*C. Custance.* No.

*M. Mery.* Wil ye take him?

*C. Custance.* I defie him.

*M. Mery.* At my word?

*C. Custance.* A shame take him.

Waste no more wynde, for it will neuer bee.

*M. Mery.* This one fault with twaine shall be  
mended, ye shall see.

Gentle mistresse Custance now, good mistresse Custance,  
Honeymistresse Custance now, sweete mistresse Custance,  
Golden mistresse Custance now, white mistresse Custance,  
Silken mistresse Custance now, faire mistresse Custance

*C. Custance.* Faith rather than to mary with suche  
a doltishe loute,

I woulde matche my selfe with a begger out of cloute.

*M. Mery.* Then I can say no more, to speede we  
are not like,

Except ye rappe out a ragge of your Rhetorike.

*C. Custance.* Speake not of winnyng me : for it  
shall neuer be so.

*R. Royster.* Yes dame, I will haue you whether ye will or no,

I commaunde you to loue me, wherefore shoulde ye not? Is not my loue to you chafing and burning hot?

*M. Mery.* Too hir, that is well sayd.

*R. Royster.* Shall I so breake my braine To dote vpon you, and ye not loue vs againe?

*M. Mery.* Wel sayd yet.

*C. Custance.* Go to you goose.

*R. Royster.* I say Kit Custance, In case ye will not haze, well, better yes perchaunce.

*C. Custance.* Auaunt lozell, picke thee hence.

*M. Mery.* Wel sir, ye perceiue, For all your kinde offer, she will not you receiue.

*R. Royster.* Then a strawe for hir, and a strawe for hir againe,

She shall not be my wife, woulde she neuer so faine,  
No and though she would be at ten thousand pounde  
cost. [ye haue lost.

*M. Mery.* Lo dame, ye may see what an husbände

*C. Custance.* Yea, no force, a iewell muche better  
lost than founde.

*M. Mery.* Ah, ye will not beleue how this doth my  
heart wounde.

How shoulde a mariage betwene you be towarde,  
If both parties drawe backe, and become so frowarde.

*R. Royster.* Nay dame, I will fire thee out of thy  
house,

And destroy thee and all thine, and that by and by.

*M. Mery.* Nay for the passion of God sir, do not so.

*R. Royster.* Yes, except she will say yea to that she  
sayde no.

*C. Custance.* And what, be there no officers trow  
we, in towne

To checke idle loytrers, braggyng vp and downe?

Where be they, by whome vacabunds shoulde be re-  
prest?

That poore fillie Widowes might liue in peace and rest.

Shall I neuer ridde thee out of my companie?

I will call for helpe, what hough, come forth Trupenie.

**Trupenie.** Anon. What is your will mistresse? dyd  
ye call me? [may be,

**C. Cnstance.** Yea, go runne apace, and as fast as  
Pray Tristram Trusty, my moste assured frende,  
To be here by and by, that he may me defende.

**Trupenie.** That message so quickly shall be done by  
Gods grace,

That at my returne ye shall say, I went apace. *Exeat.*

**C. Cnstance.** Then shall we see I trowe, whether ye  
shall do me harme,

**R. Royster.** Yes in faith Kitte, I shall thee and  
thine so charme,

That all women incarnate by thee may beware.

**C. Cnstance.** Nay, as for charming me, come hither  
if thou dare, [traine,

I shall cloute thee tyll thou stinke, both thee and thy  
And coyle thee mine owne handes, and sende thee  
home againe. [me threaten?

**R. Royster.** Yea sayst thou me that dame? dost thou  
Goe we, I still see whether I shall be beaten.

**M. Mery.** Nay for the paine of God, let me now  
treate peace,

For bloudshed will there be in case this strife increace.  
Ah good dame Cnstance, take better way with you.

**C. Cnstance.** Let him do his worst.

**M. Mery.** Yeld in time.

**R. Royster.** Come hence thou.

*Exeat Roister et Mery.*

## Actus. iiij. Scæna. iiij.

Christian Cnstance. Anot Alpace.

Tibet C. M. Mumblecrust.

**C. Cnstance.**



O firra, if I should not with  
hym take this way,  
I should not be ridde  
of him I thinke till  
doomes day,

*Roister Doister.*

I will call forth my folkes, that without any mockes  
 If he come agayne we may giue him rappes and knockes.  
 Mage Mumblecrust, come forth, and Tibet Talke apace.  
 Yea and come forth too, mistresse Annot Alyface.

Annot Aly. I come.

Tibet. And I am here.

M. Mumb. And I am here too at length.

C. Custance. Like warriers if nede bee, ye must  
 shew your strength

The man that this day hath thus begiled you,  
 Is Ralph Roister Doister, whome ye know well mowe,  
 The moste loute and daslarde that euer on grounde  
 trode. [abrode.

Tib. Talk. I see all folke mocke hym when he goth

C. Custance. What pretie maide? will ye talke  
 when I speake?

Tib. Talk. No forsooth good mistresse.

C. Custance. Will ye my tale breake?

He threatneth to come hither with all his force to fight,  
I charge you if he come, on him with all your might.

M. Mumb. I with my distaffe will reache hym one  
 rappe,

Tib. Talk. And I with my newe broome will sweepe  
 hym one swappe,

And then with our greate clubbe I will reache hym one  
 rappe.

An. Alifare. And I with our skimmer will fling him  
 one flappe.

Tib. Talk. Then Trupenies firesorke will him  
 shrewdly fray,

And you with the spitte may driue him quite away.

C. Custance. Go make all ready, that it may be  
 een so.

Tib. Talk. For my parte I shrewe them that last about  
 it go. *Exeunt.*

# Actus. iiij. Scæna. v.

Christian Custance. Trupenie. Tristram Trusty.

C. Custance.



Trupenie dyd promise me  
to runne a great pace,  
My friend Tristram Trusty  
to fet into this place.  
Indeede hedwelleth hence  
a good stert I confesse:

But yet a quicke messanger might twice since as I gesse,  
Haue gone and come againe. Ah yond I spie him now.

Trupeny. Ye are a slow goer sir, I make God auow.  
My mistresse Custance will in me put all the blame,  
Your leggs be longer than myne: come apace for shame.

C. Custance. I can thee thanke Trupenie, thou hast  
done right wele. [on my hele,

Trupeny. Maistresse since I went no grasse hath growne  
But maister Tristram Trustie here maketh no speede.

C. Custance. That he came at all I thanke him in  
very deede,

For now haue I neede of the helpe of some wise man.

C. Trusty. Then may I be gone againe, for none  
such I [a]m. [man

Trupenie. Ye may bee by your going: for no Alder-  
Can goe I dare say, a sadder pace than ye can.

C. Custance. Trupenie get thee in, thou shalt among  
them knowe,

How to vse thy selfe, like a propre man I trowe.

Trupeny. I go. *Ex.* [much.

C. Custance. Now Tristram Trusty I thank you right  
For at my first sending to come ye neuer grutch.

C. Trusty. Dame Custance God ye saue, and while  
my life shall last, [waft.

For my friende Goodluckes sake ye shall not sende in

C. Custance. He shal giue you thanks.

C. Trusty. I will do much for his sake

C. Custance. But alack, I feare, great displeasure  
shall be take.

**T. Trusty.** Wherfore?

**C. Custance.** For a foolish matter.

**T. Trusty.** What is your cause [dawes.

**C. Custance.** I am yll accombred with a couple of

**T. Trusty.** Nay weepe not woman: but tell me what your cause is

As concerning my friende is any thing amisse?

**C. Custance.** No not on my part: but here was Sym Suresby.

**T. Trustie.** He was with me and told me so.

**C. Custance.** And he stode by

While Ralph Roister Doister with helpe of Merygreeke.  
For promise of mariage dyd vnto me seeke.

**T. Trusty.** And had ye made any promise before them twaine, [slaine,

**C. Custance.** No I had rather be torne in pieces and  
No man hath my faith and trowth, but Gawyn Good-  
lucke,

And that before Suresby dyd I say, and there flucke,  
But of certaine letters there were suche words spoken.

**T. Trustie.** He tolde me that too.

**C. Custance.** And of a ring and token.

That Suresby I spied, dyd more than halfe suspect,  
That I my faith to Gawyn Goodlucke dyd reiect.

**T. Trusty.** But there was no such matter dame Custance in deede?

**C. Custance.** If euer my head thought it, God sende me yll speede.

Wherfore I beseech you, with me to be a witnesse,  
That in all my lyfe I neuer intended thing lesse,  
And what a brainsicke foole Ralph Roister Doister is,  
Your selfe know well enough.

**T. Trusty.** Ye say full true ywis. [apply,

**C. Custance.** Bicause to bee his wife I ne graunt nor  
Hither will he com he sweareth by and by, [house flat.  
To kill both me and myne, and beate downe my  
Therefore I pray your aide.

**T. Trustie.** I warrant you that.

**C. Custance.** Hauē I so many yeres liued a sobre life,  
And shewed my selfe honest, mayde, widowe, and wyfe

And nowe to be abused in such a vile sorte,  
Ye see howe poore Widowes lyue all voyde of comfort.

*T. Trusty.* I warrant hym do you no harme nor  
wrong at all. [most appall,

*C. Custance.* No, but Mathew Merygreeke doth me  
That he woulde ioyne hym felse with fuche a wretched  
loute. [doubte,

*T. Trusty.* He doth it for a iest I knowe hym out of  
And here cometh Merygreke.

*C. Custance.* Then shal we here his mind.

## Actus. iiij. Scæna. vj.

*Merygreke. Christian Custance. Trist. Trusty.*

*M. Mery.*



ustance and Trustie both, I  
doe you here well finde.

*C. Custance.* Ah Mathew  
Merygreeke, ye haue vsed  
me well.

*M. Mery.* Nowe for altogether ye must your  
answere tell.

Will ye haue this man, woman? or else will ye not?  
Else will he come neuer bore so brymme nor toft so hot.

*Tris. and Cu.* But why ioyne ye with him.

*T. Trusty.* For mirth.

*C. Custance.* Or else in sadnesse [mater gesse.

*M. Mery.* The more fond of you both hardly yat  
*Tristram.* Lo how say ye dame?

*M. Mery.* Why do ye thinke dame Custance  
That in this wowyng I haue ment ought but pastance?

*C. Custance.* Much things ye spake, I wote, to  
maintaine his dotage.

*M. Mery.* But well might ye iudge I spake it all  
in mockage?

For why? Is Roister Doister a fitte husband for you?

*T. Trusty.* I dare say ye neuer thought it.

*M. Mery.* No to God I vow.

*And dyd not I knowe afore of the insuranc  
Betweene Gawyn Goodlucke, and Christian Custance?  
And dyd not I for the nonce, by my conuevance,  
Reade his letter in a wrong sence for daliance?  
That if you coude haue take it vp at the first bounde,  
We should therat such a sporte and pastime haue  
founde,*

*That all the whole towne should haue ben the merier.*

*C. Custance.* Ill ake your heades both, I was neuer  
werier,

*Nor neuer more vexte since the first day I was borne.*

*T. Trusty.* But very well I wist he here did all in  
scorne.

*C. Custance.* But I feared therof to take dishonestie.

*M. Mery.* This should both haue made sport, and  
shewed your honestie [low.

*And Goodlucke I dare sweare, your witte therin would*

*T. Trusty.* Yea, being no worse than we know it  
to be now. [come to him,

*M. Mery.* And nothing yet to late, for when I  
Hither will he repaire with a sheepes looke full grim,  
By plaine force and violence to driue you to yelde.

*C. Custance.* If ye two bidde me, we will with him  
I and my maides together. [pitche a fiede,

*M. Mery.* Let vs see, be bolde.

*C. Custance.* Ye shall see womens warre.

*T. Trusty.* That fight wil I behold. brim,

*M. Mery.* If occasion serue, takyng his parte full  
I will strike at you, but the rappe shall light on him.  
When we first appeare.

*C. Custance.* Then will I runne away  
As though I were asfeard.

*T. Trusty.* Do you that part wel play  
And I will sue for peace.

*M. Mery.* And I wil set him on.  
Then will he looke as fierce as a Cottfold lyon.

*T. Trusty.* But when gost thou for him?

*M. Mery.* That do I very nowe.



**C. Custance.** Ye shal find vs here.

**M. Mery.** Wel god haue mercy on you. *Ex.*

**C. Trusty.** There is no cause of feare, the least boy  
in the streete : [him take his feete.

**C. Custance.** Nay, the least girle I haue, will make  
But hearke, me thinke they make preparation.

**C. Trusty.** No force, it will be a good recreation.

**C. Custance.** I will stand within, and steppe forth  
speedily,

And so make as though I ranne away dreadfully.

## Actus. iiij. Scæna. vij.

**R. Royster.** **M. Merygreeke.** **C. Custance.**

**D. Doughtie.** **Harpax.** **Tristram Trusty.**

**R. Royster.**



Owe sirs, keepe your ray, and  
see your heartes befloute,  
But where be these caitifes,  
me think they dare not  
route, [say?

How sayst thou Merygreeke? What doth Kit Custance

**M. Mery.** I am loth to tell you.

**R. Royster.** Tushe speake man, yea or nay? [I can.

**M. Mery.** Forsooth sir, I haue spoken for you all that  
But if ye winne hir, ye must een play the man,  
Een to fight it out, ye must a mans heart take.

**R. Royster.** Yes, they shall know, and thou knowest  
I haue a stomacke. [man had.

[**M. Mery.**] A stomacke (quod you) yea, as good as ere

**R. Royster.** I trowe they shall finde and feele that  
I am a lad. [meate as well,

**M. Mery.** By this crosse I haue seene you cate your  
As any that ere I haue seene of or heard tell,  
A stomacke quod you? he that will that denie  
I know was neuer at dynner in your companie.

**R. Royster.** Nay, the stomacke of a man it is that  
I meane. [I weene.

**M. Mery.** Nay the stomacke of a horse or a dogge

*Roister Doister.*

**R. Royster.** Nay a mans stomacke with a weapon  
meane I. [spoone in a pie.

**M. Mery.** Ten men can scarce match you with a

**R. Royster.** Nay the stomake of a man to trie in  
strife. [in my lyfe.

**M. Mery.** I neuer sawe your stomacke cloyed yet

**R. Royster.** Tushe I meane in strife or fighting  
to trie. [angry.

**M. Mery.** We shall see how ye will strike nowe being

**R. Royster.** Haue at thy pate then, and saue thy  
head if thou may. [this day,

**M. Mery.** Nay then haue at your pate agayne by

**R. Royster.** Nay thou mayst not strike at me againe  
in no wise. [warrantise:

**M. Mery.** I can not in fight make to you suche  
But as for your foes here let them the bargaine bie.

**R. Royster.** Nay as for they, shall euery mothers  
childe die.

And in this my fume a little thing might make me,  
To beate downe house and all, and else the deuill take  
me.

**M. Mery.** If I were as ye be, by gogs deare mother,  
I woulde not leaue one stone vpon an other.

Though she woulde redeeme it with twentie thousand  
poundes.

**R. Royster.** It shall be euen so, by his lily woundes.

**M. Mery.** Bee not at one with hir vpon any amendes.

**R. Royster.** No though she make to me neuer so  
many frendes.

Nor if all the worlde for hir woulde vndertake,  
No not God hymselfe neither, shal not hir peace make,  
On therfore, marche forwarde, soft, stay a whyle yet.

**M. Mery.** On.

**R. Royster.** Tary.

**M. Mery.** Forth.

**R. Royster.** Back.

**M. Mery.** On.

**R. Royster.** Soft. Now forward set. [alas, alas.

**C. Custance.** What businesse haue we here? out

**R. Royster.** Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

Dydst thou see that Merygreeke? how afrayde she was?  
Dydst thou see how she fledde apace out of my sight?  
Ah good sweete Custance I pitie hir by this light.

*M. Mery.* That tender heart of yours wyl marre  
altogether,

Thus will ye be turned with waggyng of a fether.

*R. Royster.* On sirs, keepe your ray.

*M. Mery.* On forth, while this geare is hot

*R. Royster.* Soft, the Armes of Caleys, I haue one

*M. Mery.* What lacke we now? [thing forgot.

*R. Royster.* Retire, or else we be all slain.

*M. Mery.* Backe for the pashe of God, backe sirs,  
What is the great mater? [backe againe.

*R. Royster.* This hastie forth goyng  
Had almost brought vs all to vtter vndoing,  
It made me forget a thing most necessarie. [Marie.

*M. Mery.* Well remembred of a captaine by saint

*R. Royster.* It is a thing must be had.

*M. Mery.* Let vs haue it then.

*R. Royster.* But I wote not where nor how.

*M. Mery.* Then wote not I when.  
But what is it?

*R. Royster.* Of a chiefe thing I am to seeke. [a weke.

*M. Mery.* Tut so will ye be, when ye haue studied  
But tell me what it is?

*R. Royster.* I lacke yet an hedpiece. [to grece,

*M. Mery.* The kitchen collocauit, the best hennes  
Runne, fet it Dobinet, and come at once withall,  
And bryng with thee my potgunne, hangyng by the  
wall,

I haue seene your head with it full many a tyme,  
Couered as safe as it had bene with a skrine:  
And I warrant it saue your head from any stroke,  
Except perchaunce to be amased with the smoke:  
I warrant your head therewith, except for the mist,  
As safe as if it were fast locked vp in a chist:  
And loe here our Dobinet commeth with it nowe.

*D. Dough.* It will couer me to the shoulders well inow.

*M. Mery.* Let me see it on.

**R. Royster.** In fayth it doth metely well. [must vs tell

**M. Mery.** There can be no fitter thing. Now ye  
What to do.

**R. Royster.** Nowforth in rayfirs, and stoppe no more.

**M. Mery.** Now fainct George to borow, Drum  
dubbe a dubbe afore.

**T. Trusty.** What meane you to do fir, committe  
manslaughter. [laughter.

**R. Royster.** To kyll fortie such, is a matter of

**T. Trusty.** And who is it fir, whome ye intende  
thus to spill? [against my will.

**R. Royster.** Foolishe Cufiance here forceth me

**T. Trusty.** And is there no meane your extreme  
wrath to flake.

She fhall some amendes vnto your good mashyp make.

**R. Royster.** I will none amendes.

**T. Trusty.** Is hir offence so fore?

**M. Mery.** And he were a loute she coulde haue  
done no more.

She hath calde him foole, and dressed him like a foole.

Mocked him lyke a foole, vfed him like a foole.

**T. Trusty.** Well yet the Sheriffe, the Iustice, or  
Constable,

Hir misdemeanour to punishe might be able.

**R. Royster.** No fir, I mine owne selfe will in this  
present cause,

Be Sheriffe, and Iustice, and whole Iudge of the lawes,

This matter to amende, all officers be I shall,

Constable, Bailiffe, Sergeant.

**M. Mery.** And hangman and all. [a man.

**T. Trusty.** Yet a noble courage, and the heart of  
Should more honour winne by bearyng with a woman.  
Therefore take the lawe, and lette hir aunswere therto.

**R. Royster.** Merygreeke, the best way were euen so  
to do.

What honour should it be with a woman to fight?

**M. Mery.** And what then, will ye thus forgo and  
lese your right?

**R. Royster.** Nay, I will take the lawe on hir with-  
outen grace.

**T. Trusty.** Or yf your mashyp coulede pardon this  
I pray you forgiue hir. [one trespase.

**R. Royster.** Hoh?

**M. Mery.** Tushe tushe sir do not.  
Be good maister to hir.

**R. Royster.** Hoh?

**M. Mery.** Tush I say do not.  
And what shall your people here returne streight home?

**T. Trustie.** Yea, leuie the campe sirs, and hence  
again eche one, [call,

**R. Royster.** But be still in readinesse if I happe to  
I can not tell what sodaine chaunce may befall.

**M. Mery.** Do not off your harnesse sirs I you aduise,  
At the least for this fortnight in no maner wise,  
Perchaunce in an houre when all ye thinke least,  
Our maisters appetite to fight will be best.  
But soft, ere ye go, haue once at Custance house.

**R. Royster.** Soft, what wilt thou do?

**M. Mery.** Once discharge my harquebouse [goon.  
And for my heartes ease, haue once more with my pot-

**R. Royster.** Holde thy handes else is all our purpose  
cleane fordoone.

**M. Mery.** And it cost me my life.

**R. Royster.** I say thou shalt not. [with haile shot.

**M. Mery.** By the matte but I will. Haue once more  
I will haue some penyworth, I will not leese all.

## Actus. iiij. Scæna. viij.

**M. Merygreeke. C. Custance. R. Roister. Tib. T.**

**An. Alface. M. Mumblecrust. Trupenie.**

**Dobinet Doughlie. Harpax. Two**  
*drummes with their Ensignes.*

**C. Custance.**



**W**hat caitifes are those that  
so shake my house wall?

**M. Mery.** Ah sirrha now  
Custance if ye had so  
much wit

*Roister Doister.*

I woulde see you aske pardon, and your selues submit.  
**C. Custance.** Haue I still this adoe with a couple  
 of fooles?

**M. Mery.** Here ye what she saith?

**C. Custance.** Maidens come forth with your tooles.

**R. Royster.** In a ray.

**M. Mery.** Dubba dub firrha.

**R. Royster.** In a ray.

They come sodainly on vs.

**M. Mery.** Dubbadub.

**R. Royster.** In a ray.

That euer I was borne, we are taken tardie.

**M. Mery.** Now sirs, quite our selues like tall men  
 and hardie.

**C. Custance.** On afore Truepenie, holde thyne owne  
 Annot,

On towarde them Tibet, for scape vs they can not.

Come forth Madge Mumblecrust, so stande fast together.

**M. Mery.** God fende vs a faire day.

**R. Royster.** See they marche on hither.

**Tib. Talk.** But mistresse.

**C. Custance.** What sayst you?

**Tib.** Shall I go fet our goose?

**C. Custance.** What to do?

**Tib.** To yonder Captain I will turne hir loose

And she gape and hisse at him, as she doth at me,  
 I durst ieoparde my hande she wyll make him flee.

**C. Custance.** On forward.

**R. Royster.** They com.

**M. Mery.** Stand.

**R. Royster.** Hold.

**M. Mery.** Kepe

**R. Royster.** There.

**M. Mery.** Strike.

**R. Royster.** Take heede.

**C. Custance.** Wel sayd Truepeny.

**Trupeny.** Ah whooresons.

**C. Custance.** Wel don in deede

**M. Mery.** Hold thine owne *Harpax*, downe with  
 them Dobinet.

**C. Custance.** Now Madge, there Annot : now sticke them Tibet. [knaue,

**Tib. Talk.** All my chiefe quarell is to this same little That begyled me last day, nothyng shall him saue.

**D. Dough.** Downe with this litle queane, that hath at me such spite,  
Saue you from hir maister, it is a very sprite.

**C. Custance.** I my selfe will mounfire graunde captaine vndertake,

**R. Royster.** They win grounde.

**M. Mery.** Saue your selfe sir, for gods sake.

**R. Royster.** Out, alas, I am slaine, helpe.

**M. Mery.** Saue your self.

**R. Royster.** Alas.

**M. Mery.** Nay then, haue at you mistresse.

**R. Royster.** Thou hittest me, alas.

**M. Mery.** I wil strike at Custance here.

**R. Royster.** Thou hittest me.

**M. Mery.** So I wil.

Nay mistresse Custance.

**R. Royster.** Alas, thou hittest me still.

Hold.

**M. Mery.** Saue your self sir.

**R. Royster.** Help, out alas I am slain

**M. Mery.** Truce, hold your hands, truce for a pissing while or twaine :

Nay how say you Custance, for sauing of your life,  
Will ye yelde and graunt to be this gentmans wife ?

**C. Custance.** Ye tolde me he loued me, call ye this loue ?

**M. Mery.** He loued a while euen like a turtle doue.

**C. Custance.** Gay loue God saue it, so soone hotte,  
so soone colde,

**M. Mery.** I am sory for you : he could loue you yet so he coulde.

**R. Royster.** Nay by cocks precious she shall be none of mine.

**M. Mery.** Why so ? [kine.

**R. Royster.** Come away, by the matte she is man-  
I durst aduenture the losse of my right hande,

*Roister Doister.*

If shee dyd not flee hir other husbände :  
And see if she prepare not againe to fight.

**M. Mery.** What then ? saint George to borow, our  
Ladies knight.

**R. Royster.** Slee else whom she will, by gog she  
shall not flee mee.

**M. Mery.** How then ?

**R. Royster.** Rather than to be slaine, I will flee.

**C. Custance.** Too it againe, my knightesses, downe  
with them all.

**R. Royster.** Away, away, away, she will else kyll  
vs all.

**M. Mery.** Nay sticke to it, like an hardie man and  
a tall.

**R. Royster.** Oh bones, thou hittest me. Away, or  
else die we shall.

**M. Mery.** Away for the pashe of our sweete Lord  
Iesus Christ.

**C. Custance.** Away loute and lubber, or I shall be  
thy priest. *Exeant om.*

So this field is ours we haue driuen them all away.

**Tib Talk.** Thanks to God mistresse, ye haue had  
a faire day.

**C. Custance.** Well nowe goe ye in, and make your  
selfe some good cheere.

*Omnes pariter.* We goe.

**T. Trust.** Ah sir, what a field we haue had heere.

**C. Custance.** Friend Tristram, I pray you be a  
witnesse with me.

**T. Trust.** Dame Custance, I shall depose for your  
honestie,

And nowe fare ye well, except some thing else ye  
wolde.

**C. Custance.** Not now, but when I nede to sende I  
will be holde. *Exeat.*

I thanke you for these paines. And now I wyll get  
me in,

Now Roister Doister will no more wowyng begin. *Ex.*



# Actus. v. Scæna. j.

Gawyn Goodlucke. Sym Suresby.



Ym Suresby my trustie man, nowe  
aduise thee well,  
And see that no false surmises thou  
me tell,  
Was there such adoe about Cus-  
tance of a truth?

Sim. Sure. To reporte that I  
hearde and sawe, to me is ruth,

But both my duetie and name and propretie,  
Warneth me to you to shewe fidelitie,  
It may be well enough, and I wyshe it so to be,  
She may hir selfe discharge and trie hir honestie,  
Yet their clayme to hir me thought was very large,  
For with letters rings and tokens, they dyd hir charge.  
Which when I hearde and sawe I would none to you  
bring. [thing.

G. Goodl. No, by fainct Marie, I allowe thee in that  
Ah sira, nowe I see truthe in the prouerbe olde,  
All things that shineth is not by and by pure golde,  
If any doe lyue a woman of honestie,  
I would haue sworne Christian Custance had bene shee.

Sim. Sure. Sir, though I to you be a seruant true  
and iust.

Yet doe not ye therefore your faithfull spouse mystrust.  
But examine the matter, and if ye shall it finde,  
To be all well, be not ye for my wordes vnkinde.

G. Goodl. I shall do that is right, and as I see  
cause why.

But here commeth Custance forth, we shal know by  
and by.

*Actus. v. Scaena. ij.*

*C. Custance. Gawyn Goodlucke. Sym Suresby.*

*C. Custance.*



Come forth to see and  
hearken for newes good,  
For about this houre is  
the tyme of likelyhood,  
That Gawyn Goodlucke  
by the sayings of Suresby,

Would be at home, and lo yond I see hym I.

What Gawyn Goodlucke, the onely hope of my life,  
Welcome home, and kyss me your true espoused wife.

*Ga. Good.* Nay soft dame Custance, I must first by  
your licence,

See whether all things be cleere in your conscience,  
I heare of your doings to me very straunge.

*C. Custance.* What feare ye? that my faith towards  
you should chaunge? [entangled.

*Ga. Good.* I must needes mistrust ye be elsewhere  
For I heare that certaine men with you haue wrangled  
About the promise of mariage by you to them made.

*C. Custance.* Coulede any mans reporte your minde  
therein persuade? [to stande cleere,

*Ga. Good.* Well, ye must therin declare your selfe  
Else I and you dame Custance may not ioine this yere

*C. Custance.* Then woulde I were dead, and faire  
layd in my graue,

Ah Suresby, is this the honestie that ye haue?

To hurt me with your report, not knowyng the thing.

*Sym Sure.* If ye be honest my wordes can hurte  
you nothing.

But what I hearde and sawe, I might not but report.

*C. Custance.* Ah Lorde, helpe poore widowes, desti-  
tute of comfort. [pastance.

Truly most deare spouse, nought was done but for

*G. Good.* But such kynde offsporting is homely daliance.

*C. Custance.* If ye knewe the truthe, ye would take  
all in good parte. [in that arte.

*Ga. Good.* By your leaue I am not halfe well skilled

**C. Custance.** It was none but Roister Doister that  
foolish mome. [scuse than none.

**Ga. Good.** Yea Custance, better (they say) a badde

**C. Custance.** Why Tristram Trustie sir, your true  
and faithfull frende,

Was priue bothe to the beginning and the ende.

Let him be the Iudge, and for me testifie. [verifie,

**Ga. Good.** I will the more credite that he shall  
And bicause I will the truthe know een as it is,  
I will to him my selfe, and know all without misse.

Come on Sym Suresby, that before my friend thou may  
Auouch the same wordes, which thou dydst to me say.

*Exeant.*

## Actus. v. Scæna. iij.

**Christian Custance.**

**C. Custance.**




Lorde, howe necessarie it  
is nowe of dayes,  
That eche bodie liue  
yprightly all maner  
wayes,

For lette neuer so little a gappe be open,  
And be sure of this, the worst shall be spoken  
Howe innocent slande I in this for deede or thought?  
And yet see what mistrust towardes me it hath wrought  
But thou Lorde knowest all folkes thoughts and eke  
And thou arte the deliuerer of all innocentes. [intents  
Thou didst helpe the aduoutresse that she might be  
amended,

Much more then helpe Lorde, that neuer yll-intended.  
Thou didst helpe *Sufanna*, wrongfully accused,  
And no lesse dost thou see Lorde, how I am now abused,  
Thou didst helpe *Hester*, when she should haue died,  
Helpe also good Lorde, that my truth may be tried.  
Yet if Gawin Goodlucke with *Tristram Trusty* speake.  
I trust of yll report the force shall be but weake,  
And loe yond they come sadly talking together,  
I wyll abyde, and not shrinke for their coming hither.

## Actus. v. Scæna. iiij.

Gawyn Goodlucke. Tristram Trustie.  
 C. Custance. Sym Suresby.

Ga. Good. Nd was it none other than  
 ye to me reporte?

Tristram. No, and here  
 were ye wished to haue  
 seene the sporte.

Ga. Good. Woulde I had, rather than halfe of that  
 in my purse. [was no wurse,

Sim Sure. And I doe muche reioyce the matter  
 And like as to open it, I was to you faithfull,  
 So of dame Custance honest truth I am ioyfull.

For God forfende that I shoulde hurt hir by false  
 reporte. [comforte.

Ga. Good. Well, I will no longer holde hir in dis-

C. Custance. Nowe come they hitherwarde, I trust  
 all shall be well. [nor tongue tell,

Ga. Good. Sweete Custance neither heart can thinke  
 Howe much I ioy in your constant fidelitie,

Come nowe kisse me the pearle of perfect honestie.

C. Custance. God lette me no longer to continue  
 in lyfe,

Than I shall towardes you continue a true wyfe.

Ga. Goodl. Well now to make you for this some  
 parte of amendes,

I shall desire first you, and then suche of our frendes,  
 As shall to you seeme best, to suppe at home with me,  
 Where at your fought field we shall laugh and mery be.

Sim Sure. And mistresse I beseech you, take with  
 me no greefe,

I did a true mans part, not wishyng you repreefe.

C. Custance. Though hastie reportes through sur-  
 mises growyng,

May of poore innocentes be vtter ouerthrowyng,  
 Yet bicause to thy maister thou hast a true hart, [part.  
 And I know mine owne truth, I forgiue thee for my

**Ga. Goodl.** Go we all to my house, and of this geare no more.

Goe prepare all things Sym Surefby, hence, runne afore.

**Sim Sure.** I goe.

*Ex.*

**G. Good.** But who commeth yond, M. Merygreeke?

**C. Custance.** Roister Doisters champion, I shrewe his best cheeke. [hym too.

**T. Trusty.** Roister Doister felse your wower is with Surely some thing there is with vs they haue to doe.

## Actus. v. Scæna. v.

**M. Merygreeke. Ralph Roister. Gawyn Goodlucke. Tristram Trustie. C. Custance.**

**M. Mery.**



And I see Gawyn Goodlucke,  
to whome lyeth my mes-  
sage,

I will first salute him after his  
long voyage,

And then make all thing well concerning your behalfe.

**R. Roister.** Yea for the pashe of God.

**M. Mery.** Hence out of sight ye calfe,

Till I haue spoke with them, and then I will you fet,

**R. Roister.** In Gods name.

**M. Mery.** What master Gawin Goodluck wel met

And from your long voyage I bid you right welcome

**Ga. Good.** I thanke you. [home.

**M. Mery.** I come to you from an honest mome.

**Ga. Good.** Who is that?

**M. Mery.** Roister Doister that doughtie kite.

**C. Custance.** Fye, I can scarce abide ye shoulde his  
name recite. [all past,

**M. Mery.** Ye must take him to fauour, and pardon  
He heareth of your returne, and is full yll agast.

**Ga. Good.** I am ryght well content he haue with  
vs some chere. [be there.

**C. Custance.** Fye vpon him beast, then wyll not I

**Ga. Good.** Why Custance do ye hate hym more  
than ye loue me?

*C. Custance.* But for your mynde sir, where he were  
would I not be?

*T. Trusty.* He woulde make vs al laugh.

*M. Mery.* Ye nere had better sport. [vs resort.

*Ga. Good.* I pray you sweete Custance, let him to

*C. Custance.* To your will I assent.

*M. Mery.* Why, suche a foole it is,

As no man for good pastime would forgoe or misse.

*G. Goodl.* Fet him to go wyth vs.

*M. Mery.* He will be a glad man. *Ex.*

*T. Trusty.* We must to make vs mirth, maintaine  
hym all we can.

And loe yond he commeth and Merygreeke with him.

*C. Custance.* At his first entrance ye shall see I wyll  
him trin.

But first let vs hearken the gentlemanswise talke. [Halke.

*T. Trusty.* I pray you marke if euer ye sawe crane so

## Actus. v. Scæna. vj.

*R. Roister.* *M. Merygreeke.* *C. Custance.* *G.*  
*Goodlucke.* *T. Trustie.* *D. Doughtie.* *Harpax.*

*R. Royster.*



Ay I then be bolde?

*M. Mery.* I warrant you  
on my worde,  
They say they shall be sicke,  
but ye be at theyr borde.

*R. Royster.* Thei wer not angry then.

*M. Mery.* Yes at first, and made strange

But when I sayd your anger to fauour shoulde change,  
And therewith had commended you accordingly,

They were all in loue with your mashyp by and by.

And cried you mercy that they had done you wrong.

*R. Royster.* For why, no man, woman, nor childe  
can hate me long. [one day,

*M. Mery.* We feare (quod they) he will be auenged  
Then for a peny giue all our liues we may.

*R. Royster.* Sayd they so in deede.

*M. Mery.* Did they? yea, euen with one voice

He will forgiue all (quod I) Oh how they did reioyce.

**R. Royster.** Ha, ha, ha. [good moode,

**M. Mery.** Goe sette hym (say they) while he is in  
For haue his anger who lust, we will not by the Rood.

**R. Royster.** I pray God that it be all true, that thou  
And that she fight no more. [hast me tolde,

**M. Mery.** I warrant you, be bolde  
Too them, and salute them.

**R. Royster.** Sirs, I greeete you all well.

**Omnes.** Your maister ship is welcom.

**C. Custance.** Sauyng my quarell.

For sure I will put you vp into the Eschequer.

**M. Mery.** Why so? better nay: Wherfore?

**C. Custance.** For an vsurer.

**R. Royster.** I am no vsurer good mistresse by his  
armes. [mans harmes?

**M. Mery.** When tooke he gaine of money to any

**C. Custance.** Yes, a fowle vsurer he is, ye shall  
see els. [no mo quarels?

**R. Royster.** Didst not thou promise she would picke

**C. Custance.** He will lende no blowes, but he haue  
in recompence

Fiftene for one, whiche is to muche of conscience.

**R. Royster.** Ah dame, by the auncient lawe of  
armes, a man

Hath no honour to foile his handes on a woman.

**C. Custance.** And where other vsurers take their  
gaines yerely,

This man is angry but he haue his by and by.

**Ga. Goodl.** Sir, doe not for hir sake beare me your  
displeasure. [at leasure.

**M. Mery.** Well, he shall with you talkē therof more  
Vpon your good vsage, he will now shake your hande.

**R. Royster.** And much heartily welcome from a  
straunge lande.

**M. Mery.** Be not asearde Gawyn to let him shake  
your fyst. [I wist.

**Ga. Goodl.** Oh the moste honeste gentleman that ere  
I beseeche your mashyp to take payne to suppe with vs.

**M. Mery.** He shall not say you nay and I too, by Iesus.

*Roister Doister.*

Bicause ye shall be friends, and let all quarels passe.

**R. Royster.** I wyll be as good friends with them as  
ere I was. [haue a song.

**M. Mery.** Then let me fet your quier that we may

**R. Royster.** Goe. [yeare long.

**G. Goodluck.** I haue hearde no melodie all this

**M. Mery.** Come on sirs quickly.

**R. Royster.** Sing on sirs, for my frends sake.

**D. Dough.** Cal ye these your frends?

**R. Royster.** Sing on, and no mo words make.

*Here they sing.*

**Ga. Good.** The Lord preferue our most noble  
Queene of renowne,

And hir virtues rewarde with the heauenly crowne.

**C. Custance.** The Lorde strengthen hir most excel-  
lent Maiestie,

Long to reigne ouer vs in all prosperitie. [to defende,

**T. Trusty.** That hir godly proceedings the faith  
He may stablishe and maintaine through to the ende.

**M. Mery.** God graunt hir as she doth, the Gospell  
to protect,

Learning and vertue to aduaunce, and vice to correct.

**R. Royster.** God graunt hir louyng subiects both  
the minde and grace,

Hir most godly procedyngs worthily to imbrace. [prosper,

**Harpax.** Hir highnesse most worthy counsellors God  
With honour and loue of all men to minister.

**Omnes.** God graunt the nobilitie hir to serue and loue,  
With all the whole commontie as doth them behoue.

AMEN.

## Certaine Songs to be song by

*those which shall vse this Comedie or Enterlude.*

### The Seconde Song.

**W**Ho so to marry a minion Wyfe,  
Hath hadde good chaunce and happe,  
Must loue hir and cherishe hir all his life,  
And dandle hir in his lappe.



If she will fare well, yf she wyll go gay,  
A good husbände euer styll,  
What euer she lust to doe, or to fay,  
Must lette hir haue hir owne will.

About what affaires so euer he goe,  
He must shewe hir all his mynde,  
None of hys counsell she may be kept free,  
Else is he a man vnkynde.

*The fourth Song.*

**I** Mun be married a Sunday  
I mun be married a Sunday,  
Who soeuer shall come that way,  
I mun be married a Sunday.

Royster Doyster is my name,  
Royster Doyster is my name,  
A lustie brute I am the same,  
I mun be married a Sunday.

Christian Custance haue I founde,  
Christian Custance haue I founde,  
A Wydowe worthe a thousande pounde,  
I mun be married a Sunday.

Custance is as sweete as honey,  
Custance is as sweete as honey,  
I hir lambe and she my coney,  
I mun be married a Sunday.

When we shall make our weddyng feast,  
When we shall make oure weddyng feast,  
There shall bee cheere for man and beast,  
I mun be married a Sunday.

I mun be married a Sunday, etc.

*The Psalmodie*

**P** *Lacebo dilexi,* [die,  
Maister Roister Doister wil streight go home and  
Our Lorde Iesus Christ his soule haue mercie vpon  
Thus you see to day a man, to morrow Iohn.

Yet sauing for a womans extreeme crueltie,  
 He might haue lyued yet a moneth or two or three.  
 But in spite of Custance which hath h..n weried,  
 His mas hyp shall be worshipfully buried.  
 And while some piece of his soule is yet hym within,  
 Some parte of his funeralls let vs here beginne.

*Dirige.* He will go darklyng to his graue.  
*Neque lux, neque crux, nisi solum clinke,*  
 Neuer gentman so went toward heauen I thinke.

Yet firs as ye wyll the blisse of heauen win,  
 When he commeth to the graue lay hym softly in,  
 And all men take heede by this one Gentleman,  
 How you sette your loue vpon an vnkinde woman:  
 For these women be all suche madde pieuish elues,  
 They wyll not be woonne except it please them selues.  
 But in faith Custance if euer ye come in hell,  
 Maister Roister Doister shall serue you as well. [knaue.  
 Good night Roger olde knaue, Farewel Roger olde  
 Good night Roger olde knaue, knaue, knap.  
*Nequando. Audiui vocem. Requiem aeternam.*

**The Peale of belles rong by the parish Clerk,  
 and Roister Doisters foure men.**

**The first Bell a Triple.**  
 When dyed he? When dyed he?

**The seconde.**  
 We haue hym, We haue hym.

**The thirde**  
 Royster Doyster, Royster Doyster.

**The fourth Bell.**  
 He commeth, He commeth.

**The greate Bell.**  
 Our owne, Our owne.

FINIS.



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